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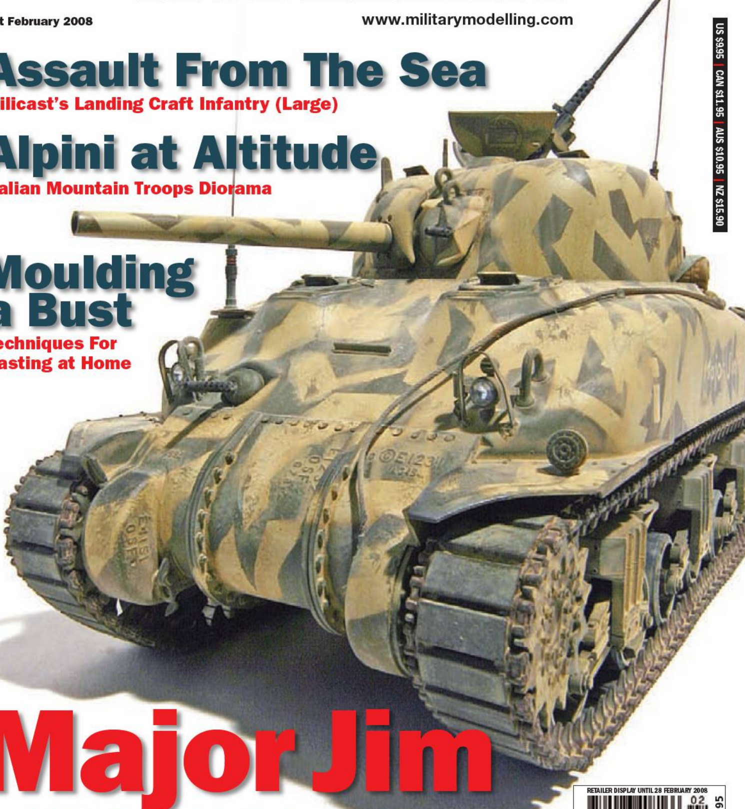

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CONTENTS

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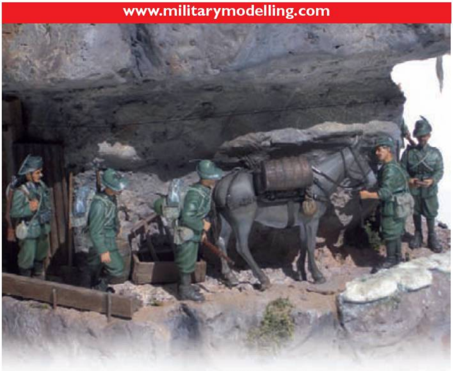


Johan Somers 'mountain' diorama features Italian Alpini or mountain troops negotiating the Sentiero degli Alpini or 'Alpine soldier trail' at the beginning of the Second World War. See Johan's article beginning on page 28.

16
'MAJOR JIM'
Steve Zaloga models Tasca's 1:35 scale M4A1 at Kasserine Pass

28
'SENTIERO DEGLI ALPINI'
Johan Somers builds a mountain diorama featuring Italian Alpini troops c.1939

34
ASSAULT FROM THE SEA
Robin Buckland assembles Milicast's 1:72 scale 'Landing Craft Infantry (Large)'

41
T-72B 'ROGATKA' 21st CENTURY URALS TANK
Cookie Sewell concludes his two-part feature on the Russian MBT

48
TAKING THE STRAIN
Chris Johnson with the final part of his Ram ARV Mark I feature

57
CROWNING GLORY
Stan Taylor shows how to make latex and plaster of Paris moulds

12
NOTICE BOARD
News for military modellers

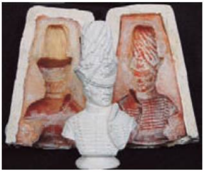
15
DESPATCH
Readers' letters

62
ON PARADE
Book reviews page

64
SMALL SCALE SCENE
News for military vehicle modellers

67
"ATTEN-SHUN!"
The products review section

COVER: Steve Zaloga's Tasca M4A1 kit built and painted as 'Major Jim' of the 2nd Battalion US 13th Armored Regiment as it appeared at Kasserine Pass. Steve's article begins on page 16.



Stan Taylor's 13th Hussar bust – cast in plaster from a latex plaster of Paris backed mould. See how to make a mould to cast your own figures at home beginning on page 57.

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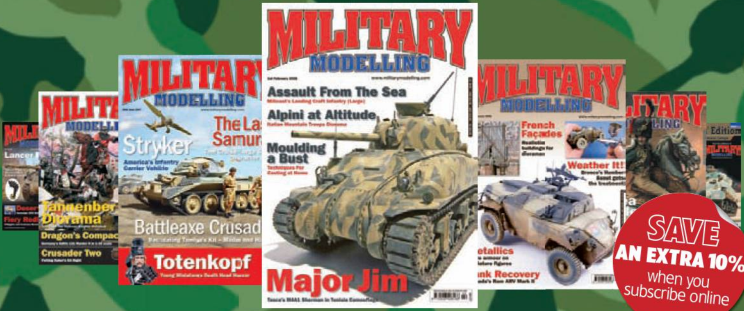

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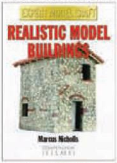

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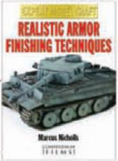

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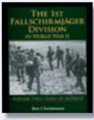

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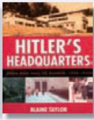

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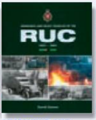

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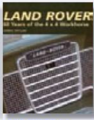

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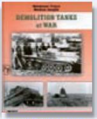

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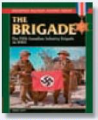

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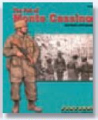

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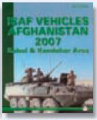

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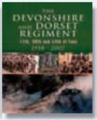

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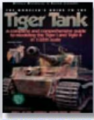

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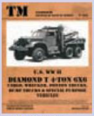

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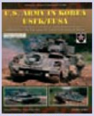

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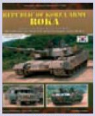

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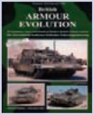

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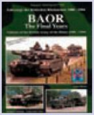

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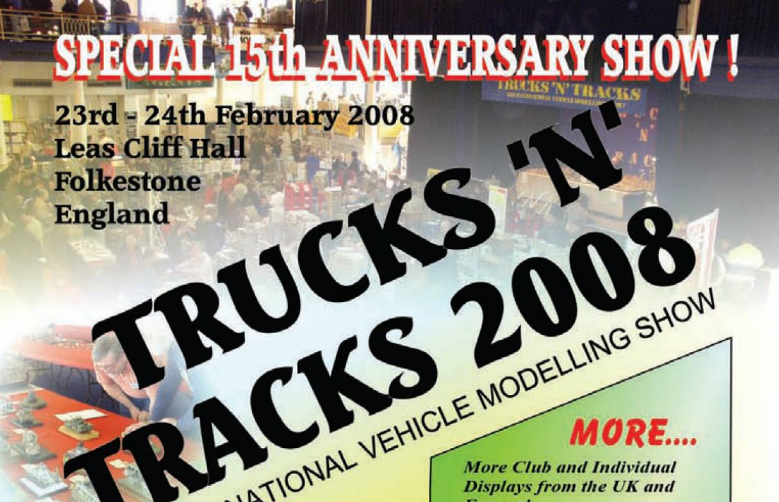

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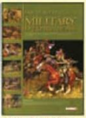
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Winners of The Royal Mail Stamp Competition!

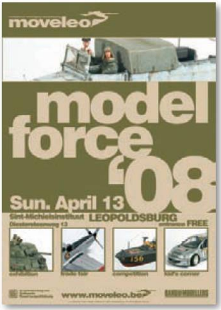
Royal Mail

Our competition in 'Notice Board' Vol.37 Issue 12 for five sets of Royal Mail British Army Uniforms Mint Stamps asked the question: "The rifle used by the 95th Rifles bore the surname of its 'inventor' – what was that surname?" The answer was **Baker** (from Ezekial Baker).

The five lucky winners in the order we drew them from the bag are: Mrs A. Achow (Kent); Mr N. Antrobus (West Sussex); Mr S. Bateman (Lancs); Warren McElholum (Australia); Nigel Woodman (Wales).

All have been informed by post and their sets of Royal Mail stamps and 'extras' we promised are on their way to them.

Mrs Achow's entry was the first drawn, so she will receive some kits and books with her stamps.



Model Force '08

Moveleo Leopoldsburg will present Model Force '08 on Sunday 13th April at the 'St-Michiel' school complex, Diestersteenweg 13, in the centre of Leopoldsburg, Belgium. The show will be open between 10.00 - 17:00 hours and will feature club displays, traders, kids' corner, an open modelling contest plus food and other refreshments. Entrance is free. More information can be found at www.moveleo.be or modelforce@moveleo.be

IPMS Salisbury

IPMS Salisbury will hold their annual Model Show and Competition on Saturday, 31st May between 09.30 and 17.00 hours at Wyvern College, Church Road, Laverstock, Salisbury SP1 1RE. There will be over 45 Clubs, SIGs and Traders, plus a raffle and refreshments together with free on-site parking. Further details on the Show are available from the Secretary, Peter James, Tel: 01980 862403, Peter@toggie.freeserve.co.uk or visit the Website: www.IPMS-Salisbury.org

Royal Logistics Corps Museum Events

The museum of the Royal Logistics Corps is located at the Princess Royal Barracks at Deepcut, Camberley in Surrey. It is a relatively small museum, but with some interesting exhibits. The museum will host two events in 2008 – one begins in March and another is planned for later in the year.

'Food in the Field' - Most of us have heard the phrase that, 'an army marches on its stomach', and feeding the troops is just one of the jobs for the Royal Logistics Corps. On 23rd–24th March 2008 the Museum will host this event looking at the development of catering for the armed forces over the last 100 years or so. Just as an example, some field cookers first made in the Crimean War were still in use right up until the Falklands Conflict, until the bulk of those original items went to the bottom of the sea on the *Atlantic Conveyer*. With British Forces still in action in places like Iraq and Afghanistan today, this remains a very relevant topic. Besides that, how many of us could deny an interest in food. Practical cooking displays are planned, illustrating how 'food in the field' has developed over the years.

'Uniforms and Vehicle Event Planning' – 'Your museum needs you…!' would be a good slogan for this item. The museum is considering an event for later in 2008 that would combine both a Military Vehicle Display, hopefully including some of the current equipment of the Corps, based at Deepcut, and along with a specific area devoted to Military Uniforms (primarily British Army) that will be aimed squarely at the military modeller and enthusiast. The idea is to have collectors/re-enactors who are experts on their own uniforms, webbing and equipment. They will be prepared to answer questions on their own topic and be happy to pose for photos or lay out webbing and equipment especially so you can photograph it close to. With space allocated to allow for photographers to get good pictures of equipment laid out, and the whole thing in an area where the backdrop will be foliage rather

LEFT: Field Marshal Montgomery's Rolls Royce in the Royal Logistics Corps Museum. ABOVE: Entrance to the Royal Logistics Corps' Museum at Deepcut, Camberley Surrey.

than clearly in the middle of a showground, this is a great idea. This will include historical uniforms of the British army as well as WW1, WW2 and the present day. Added to this will be military vehicles, and again they will be making an effort to ensure these are arranged to be 'photographer friendly' as best they can.

Now, this is where you need to play your part. For a small museum such as this, it will be a major event to stage and it's important that it is well supported. To help the Museum decide that this would be a useful style of event please let them know if you would be interested in attending, if this is to go ahead. The new museum director, Andy Robertshaw, needs your feedback to help. To make things easy, please let me know if you would be interested in such a show, and I will pass on the feedback to the Museum. This offers a real opportunity to modellers in particular, whether your interest is vehicles or uniforms, and plans to facilitate good photographic opportunities. So let me know at robin@rbuckland.freeserve.co.uk or you can write to the Royal Logistics Corps Museum, The Princess Royal Barracks, Deepcut, Camberley, Surrey GU16 6RW. The more feedback we get, the more likely the event will go ahead.

Robin Buckland

RepLIcon XXIII

RepLIcon XXIII hosted by the Long Island Scale Model Society chapter of IPMS-USA will be held on 29th March at the Freeport Recreation Center, 130 E. Merrick Road, Freeport, New York, right off Meadowbrook Parkway just 20 minutes away from two first class air museums. Help us celebrate our 36th Anniversary as an IPMS-USA Chapter with our biggest show ever!

RepLIcon features 'AMPS-like' Gold, Silver and Bronze awards for Armour, Diorama and Figure categories and 1st, 2nd, 3rd place awards for all others. It has the first annual Mike Salzano sponsored 'Braille Scale Award' for 1:72 scale and smaller armour entries, along with over 43 categories - the most in the tri-state area!

RepLIcon is 2008's first and largest Model Show and Contest on Long Island with the Biggest Raffle, the most kits, books, decals, tools and collectibles vendors; a large outdoor display of restored military vehicles; free Make 'n' Take Clinic for kids; family discounts; special awards for the Frederick J. Seitz III Best Tail Hook model, Best Desert Storm, Best on L.I. and a Triathlon category.

Meet guest speaker Sergeant Bob Cucce who survived his tour in Vietnam as the 'quad fifty' gunner on gun trucks. Speak loudly so he can hear you and tell you what it's like with .50 cal machine guns going off next to your ears! Also meet guest speaker 1st Lt. Julius Cobb, who was lead bombardier of the 91st Bomb Group, 8th AF WWII on whom a character was based in the movie *Twelve o'Clock High*... and hear what it was like flying over Germany in a B-17G named 'The General Ike' and beating the odds to survive 30 missions!

Model kit and supplies, and sundry items (toothbrushes, Kool Aid, phone cards…) donations to US troops in Iraq will be accepted and shipped out. We offer Free Admission for our military men and women in uniform and discounts to families.

For further vendor info check out our Website http://longislandscalemodel.tripod.com/ or contact Bob DeMaio taurleo@optonline.net or Howie Belkin hab69@aol.com for all other info.

Welling Model Show

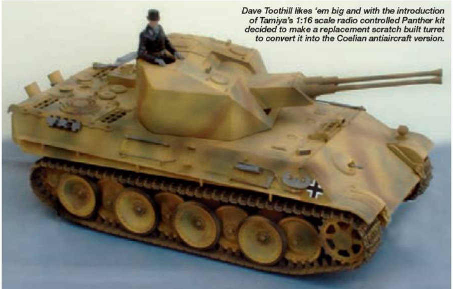
'Welling 2008 Model Show and Open Day' will be held on Saturday, 29th March at Falconwood Community Centre, The Green, Welling, Kent. The doors will be open from 10am - 4.30pm, with admission at £1 for adults, and 50p for juniors and concessions. There will be an 'Open Competition' for over 20 classes including juniors with entries at 50p. Also featured will be displays by clubs from around the South East and trade stands from all over the UK. During the day there will be demonstrations on sculpting and painting and living history groups will re-enact the American Civil War period. A 'Bring & Buy' sale will be in full swing for that special bargain. The Raffle will have 'second to none prizes' of models and other items and there will be a 'Special Figure Raffle' – the prize will be announced. Refreshments are available at the venue. All correspondence about Welling Model Show to Roy Hunt, 9 Joyce Page Close, Charlton, London SE7 8TA. Tel/Fax: 020 8305 2868. royhunt.models@virgin.net

East Anglian Model Competition

IPMS Ipswich are pleased to announce that SBX Model Shop will be sponsoring the 3rd East Anglian Model Competition on Friday, 6th June 2008 at Ransomes Sports and Social Club, Sidegate Avenue, Ipswich IP4 4JJ. Entry is free with a 50p per model charge for the competition. Non-competition admission is £1 Adults and concessions at 50p. A bar and USAFE BBQ will feature from 19.00 hours until closing. A big screen TV will be available in case of FA interference - again! Entries close at 20.00 hours so pre-register to avoid any delays. For further information Contact: Kev Baxter Tel: 01473 832163. www.ipms-ipswich.org.uk

Plymouth Model Exhibition

Plymouth Model Exhibition will be held on Saturday 26th April at The Guildhall in Plymouth. The doors will be open 10am - 4.30pm and there will be 30 plus Clubs and Traders in attendance. Refreshments are available all day. Further details from Dave Watson, 01752 518287
spotandjoe@blueyonder.co.uk



Dave Toothill likes 'em big and with the introduction of Tamiya's 1:16 scale radio controlled Panther kit decided to make a replacement scratch built turret to convert it into the Coelian antiaircraft version.

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● Military Modelling magazine's Magicalia Website went on line at the beginning of this year to give everyone easy access to extra features and facilities to the established monthly magazine. It's the ideal place on the Internet to display pictures of your models and somewhere you can discuss the hobby with others on the forum and have your say… You may even find some pages selected from early Military Modelling magazines that will show how much the hobby has changed over the years. Why not give it a try today!

● Additions are constantly being made to the new Website and we listen to your suggestions for improvements and additions that will help us give you what you'd like to see. There are benefits for subscribers to Military Modelling magazine and also for those who intend to become subscribers. It's never been easier to subscribe to Military Modelling magazine and you can do it on line – a facility especially useful for readers outside of the United Kingdom.

● The Web Editor is Vinnie Branigan, who is an active modeller and you can see his work on line. He also runs the lively forum and presents announcements and reviews of new products – figure and AFV kits, books, materials and displays the latest news items about events and shows that he and others have attended, and also what's happening in the military modelling world.

● You can sign on the Military Modelling Website today – as we say it's only a click away… you simply fill in your name and details to register and then have a look around the site. Maybe you can let us know what you think first visit, and post some suggestions, which will be welcome because YOUR input is valuable to us. We anticipate you may have plenty to say and we welcome your views…

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Despatch

Readers' Letters and E-mails

- **The Editor welcomes readers' letters and e-mails for publication which must always be accompanied by the writer's full name and address. The address will be published in full if the letter or e-mail is interpreted as a request for information to the readership. Otherwise, only the writer's full name will be published.**

- **Letters and e-mails are not, under any circumstances, altered or severely edited; however, they may be shortened because of space limitations. The Editor is not necessarily in agreement with the views expressed in published readers' correspondence.**

- **Letters and e-mails to the Editor intended for publication should be addressed to:**

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- **E-mail: ken.jones@magicalia.com**

Compelled to write

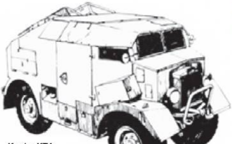
Sir,
As a long-time reader/subscriber I have always enjoyed the sometimes-heated debates in Despatches; however it was on reading the letters of Messers Barraclough and Stevens in your December issue that I feel compelled to write.

I almost exclusively model German WW2 AFVs and have little interest in figures or most other vehicles. This does not mean, however, that I dismiss articles on other subjects, as a well-written article is still enlightening both for the history lesson and the modelling techniques used.

Mr Barraclough takes issue with the price; £3.95 is less than most monthly magazines (so 15 issues for an annual subscription of £48.60 is even better value). The cost must be weighed against the value of the vast range of techniques and subjects covered thus expanding our skills as modellers and historic knowledge as a whole. A review of a product could save £'s on a poor choice or direct one to an outstanding item that may otherwise be missed and access is given to many photos that would be difficult to obtain.

The Staghound article had no interest to me as subject matter, but the detailed coverage was commendable and the modelling was very well executed; the skilful assembly, painting and weathering of any vehicle all adds to one's skill base, whether it's painted Olive Drab or *Dunkelgrün!* Perhaps at their next 'monthly appraisal' of *MM* Mr Stevens and friends will agree an appreciation of the vast diversity encompassed by our hobby, which is covered so well by *MM,* is in order and we are all so much better off than if *MM* was no longer published.

Keep up the good work.
David Chatten


Karrier KT4 from Tamiya's instruction sheet. See Ian Armstrong's letter.

A comment

Dear Editor,
I feel the need to make a comment on the current topic of discussion in last month's *Mil Mod* 21st December 2007. This concerned the quantity of material written about the Staghound and also the price of *Military Modelling* magazine.

I have subscribed to your magazine for 16 years and do recall issues that were largely figure based. I appreciate that no figure-painting article has ever been as long as the accused article, but the regimental history articles published throughout the years have been a good proportion of the length and, in some cases, published twice.

I fear that we might be too short sighted and forget that across several decades the content of *Mil Mod* will be quite well balanced. Perhaps some of the figure painters could produce longer histories to complement their painting articles? These would create an eclectic range of knowledge and would enrich the magazine still further.

The quality of kits and figures, it has to be said, is astounding compared with what was available, and so they should be given as much exposure as possible.

My second point is regarding the price. Prices go up, it is unavoidable. I am sure that the *Mil Mod* 'bean counters' run a tight ship and no one receives a premiere league footballer's salary. Thousands of people buy 'veg boxes' and tolerate the seasonal surfeit of sprouts or lettuce, but the customer still subscribes for this surfeit knowing that the next month will see an end to mountains of artichokes and the arrival of a carrot frenzy. Loyal subscribers to *Mil Mod* have to accept that some months an AFV or the like will be prominently featured, while the following month will see an excellent range of figure articles.

Finally, I have a cry for help! Does anyone have decent references for the Karrier KT4 'Spider?' This was the Indian Army Field Artillery Tractor in WW2. There is a reasonable sketch of it on the instruction sheet for the Tamiya Quad and I have a good front view, but I need some more info for a 1:76 scale model. Many thanks and regards.
Ian Armstrong
35 School Hill, Slindon, West Sussex BN18 0SH
Anyone who can help Ian with details on the Karrier KT4 Field Artillery Tractor please contact him direct. Ed.

NICKELAGE
ÉREAFILS

Dust off the tools!

Dear Editor,
What an interesting and practical article, Realistic Buildings, by Emmanuel Nouaillier in last month's magazine. It kindled life into my old fingers with an urge to dust off the tools and have a go.

What will be of interest to your readers is the address of a magnificent mail order firm that can supply all the materials and tools mentioned in the article, and much more besides. Their catalogue has 31 pages devoted to scenic modelling materials of every description. There are many other pages of all the tools and equipment needed for the craft and modelling enthusiast.

A few items to mention, in passing, are resin based Scenic Water, Solid Water and Deep Water and what about 84 (illustrated) embossed polystyrene sheets!

Their address is Squires Model & Craft Tools, 100 London Road, Bognor Regis, West Sussex PO21 1DD. Tel: 01243 842424. I suggest anyone contacting them should mention *Military Modelling*. Keep up the good work.
Stan Catchpol

BRC Crusaders

Dear Mr Jones,
As a Staffordian, I can help with Phil Beards' letter to 'Despatch' in Issue No.15.

The British Reinforced Concrete Company did, indeed, have a factory near Queensville Bridge. However, right beside the bridge is the former English Electric Company factory. In 1940 the latter works was extended in order for production to begin on Churchill tanks. These underwent various trials at the factory and on Cannock Chase, a few miles east of Stafford. Thanks for an always interesting magazine.
Bruce Braithwaite

Health and Safety

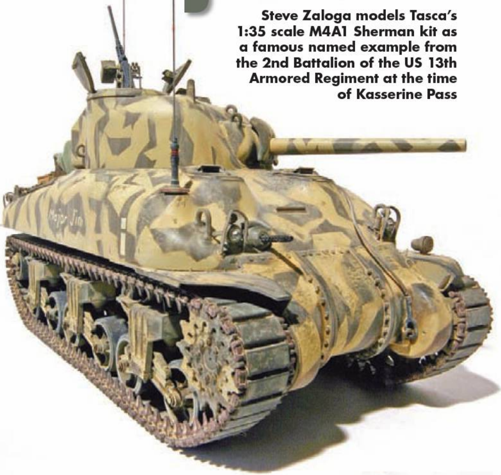
Dear Sir,
Whilst it was great to see the photos of the superbly restored Staghounds in 'Despatch' Vol.37 Issue 15, I was most surprised to see the young lady sitting on the front of the lead vehicle, which presumably was in motion!

I work as a volunteer at a local Military Museum and when 'crewing' or as a passenger on vehicles which are moving, am under strict instructions to keep within the vehicle to avoid the possibility of falling. I cannot understand how the vehicle commander (whose responsibility it is) or indeed the organizers of the event could allow such a risk to be taken. Imagine the furore if she had fallen under the wheels!

On a lighter note, the recent Staghound and Humber Scout Car articles were excellent. I hope that the current trend for I.M. kits of British WW2 armour will continue, I wonder what chance there is of a Covenanter, Vickers Mark VI or any of the 'A' series tanks in 1:35 scale. Here's hoping. Regards,
Mike Prorok

'Major Jim'

Steve Zaloga models Tasca's 1:35 scale M4A1 Sherman kit as a famous named example from the 2nd Battalion of the US 13th Armored Regiment at the time of Kasserine Pass



Tasca's new M4A1 (mid-production) is a welcome addition to a recent revival in Allied 1:35 scale kits, coming on top of the Bronco Staghound, Hobby Boss M4 tractor, Academy M7 Priest, and the forthcoming AFV Club M5A1. It is the best Sherman kit I have ever built and certainly on par with Tasca's superb Firefly. (*Military Modelling* Vol.37 No.9).

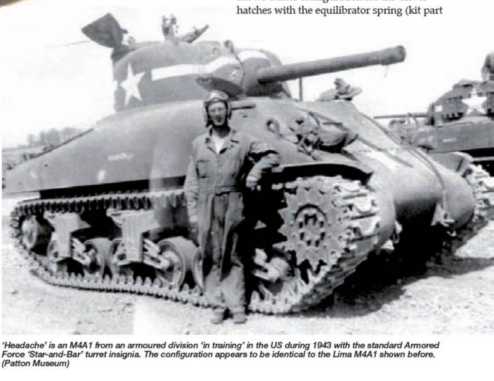
Historical Notes

The M4A1 was the first version of the Sherman in production and the 75mm versions were manufactured from February 1942 to December 1943 with some 3,700 being built. Tasca advertises their model as being 'mid-production', but a more apt description would be, 'late 1942/early 1943 production'. The M4A1 was manufactured at three assembly plants, the Lima Locomotive Works, Pacific Car & Foundry Company, and Pressed Steel Car Company. The kit depicts a Pressed Steel Car configuration, which was distinguished by a riveted lower hull while the other two plants used welded lower hulls. Pressed Steel used about 2,000 riveted lower hulls in their parallel M4 and M4A1 production lines roughly through March 1943 when they switched to welded hulls as well.

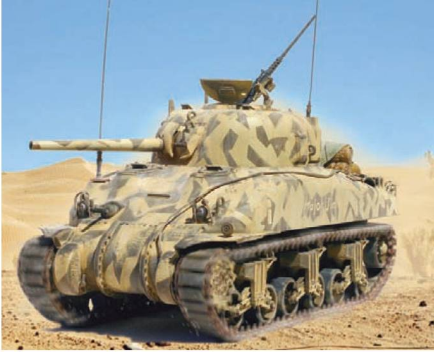
This is an issue because the decal options in the kit are in some cases not Pressed Steel tanks. From photos, it is evident that 'Major Jim' and 'Comic' have welded lower hulls and 'Henry III' probably does. The only known photo of the 2nd Armored Division tank on the decal sheet is reproduced here, and as can be seen, it's impossible to tell from the photo whether it has a riveted or welded lower hull. This is not a case of the Tasca kit being inaccurate; there is a mismatch between the decal options and the configuration presented in the kit. In this article, I will show how to covert the Tasca lower hull into the welded configuration.

The earliest M4A1 manufactured from February 1942 had some significant differences from the later Tasca configuration, notably direct vision ports in front of the driver and assistant driver stations, the earlier D37893 bogie assemblies as on the M3 medium tank, and a number of small detail differences such as the fabricated grouser box scoops. The direct vision ports were eliminated after only about 250 were built, roughly in August 1942, and the D47527 'heavy' bogie assembly with a trailing return roller arm was introduced at roughly the same time. So, the Tasca kit can be built to represent M4A1 tanks built starting roughly in late August 1942. Plants continued to use existing stockpiles of parts on hand, so it is difficult to say with any precision when one particular feature appeared or disappeared except for specific changes ordered by the Blitz programme, which were more precisely dated.

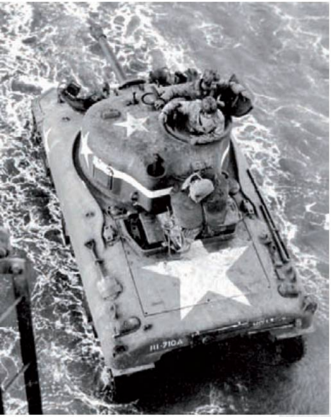
The initial version of the M4A1 that can be built from the Tasca kit would have the early features such the basic M34 gun mount with the plain rotor shield (kit part J23). The kit turret is a slightly later configuration with three small round pips on the roof associated with the turret searchlight, but these didn't appear until later in the year. The kit also shows a later configuration for the driver hatches with the equilibrator spring (kit part

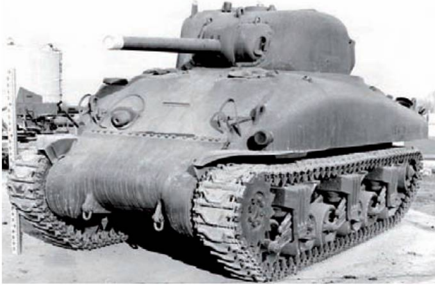


'Headache' is an M4A1 from an armoured division 'in training' in the US during 1943 with the standard Armored Force 'Star-and-Bar' turret insignia. The configuration appears to be identical to the Lima M4A1 shown before. (Patton Museum)



ABOVE LEFT: An M4A1 exiting from a LST during 1943 exercises in the US, possibly the same wargames as the 710th Tank Battalion tank seen here in another view.
ABOVE RIGHT: The completed model of 'Major Jim' in a scenic setting.



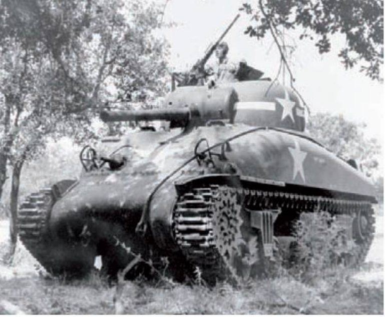


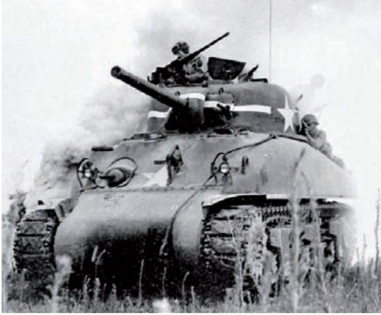
ABOVE: A fine example of a Lima M4A1 produced at around November 1942 with the one-piece differential cover for the Iowa transmission, the second pattern cut-steel plate drive sprocket and the Mars Signal Light siren on the left stub-fender. (NARA) BELOW: The 1st Armored Division was re-equipped with M4 and M4A1 in North Africa before being committed to Italy. While waiting for their assignment, most of their tanks were camouflaged in the FM-5-20B camouflage scheme of black/OD with white undershading on the hull sides and underside of the gun tube. They also adopted a new set of unit insignia using coloured bars. (Patton Museum)

ABOVE: An M4A1 of the HQ Company, 710th Tank Battalion leaving an LST during wargames off St. Clemente Island, California in 1943. The large white star was actually the regulation size at this time period, but is seldom seen except in rare high angle views such as this one. The turret is the same as in the Tasca kit, with the initial fittings for the turret searchlight. (NARA)

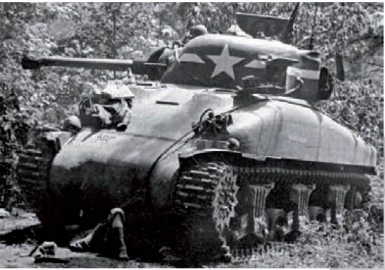
G11) and safety catch; this wasn't introduced until February-April 1943 and so would not be present on the earlier production batches.

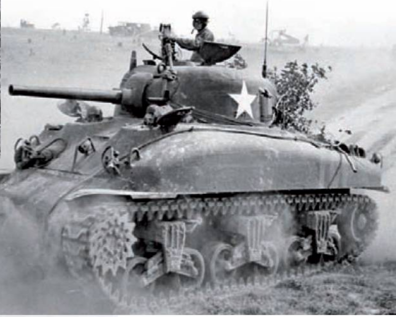
The kit provides the option for either the initial E6480 three-piece differential cover for the Iowa Transmission Company transmission (kit part C50) and the one-piece E4186 one-piece differential housing for the Caterpillar transmission (kit part J16). Although the three-piece is commonly seen on the earliest M4A1,





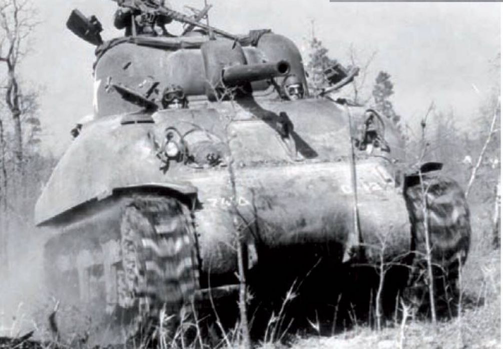
ABOVE LEFT: This M4A1 from the 4th Armored Division during training at Pine Camp in 1943 shows the next stage of M4A1 evolution with the introduction of the M34A1 gun mount with its characteristic D68454 rotor shield. Otherwise, it is pretty much the same configuration as in the Tasca kit. (NARA) ABOVE RIGHT: A M4A1 of Co. D, 741st Tank Battalion during the Louisiana manoeuvres with the later glacis-plate mounting for the siren. (NARA) BELOW: An M4A1 of the 741st Tank Battalion in training at Fort Polk, Louisiana in 1943 with the white US Army star, but not the Armored Force 'Star-and-Bar' insignia. This tank shows some of the production improvements such as the use of a Federal Sign & Signal Company siren, but in the later mounting under a brush guard on the glacis. (NARA)





ABOVE: An M4A1 named 'Black Magic' of the 745th Tank Battalion at Camp Polk in April 1943 displays an interesting variation of the 'Star-and-Bar' insignia. Note that it has the improved rotor shield with the 'collars' on either side of the gun tube. (NARA)

BELOW: Another view of a M4A1 of the 741st Tank Battalion, this time during the 1943 Louisiana manoeuvres. This is a good view of the later siren fitting slightly off-centre on the glacis plate. The cloth wrapped around the top of the turret is a temporary marking identifying the army of the tank, such as 'Red Army' or 'Blue Army', during the wargame. (NARA)



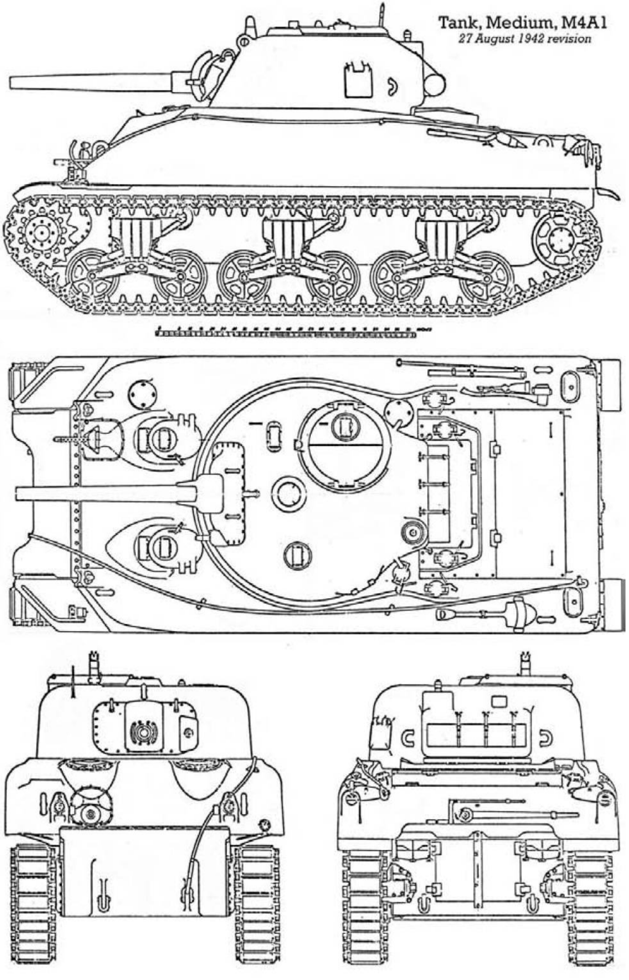
the one-piece was not a replacement, but simply an alternative and both types were used on production tanks in 1942.

The M34 gun mounting saw continual improvement through 1943, first with the introduction of a Calibre .30 shield over the co-axial machine gun (kit part J27) and later an improved rotor shield with 'collars' on either side (kit part J22) in the autumn of 1942. There were also some gradual improvements on the turret in 1943 including the addition of appliqué armour in front of the gunner, followed by a set to cover the sponson ammo bins; the kit includes these.

The kit comes with a variety of options for the suspension including both the early (kit part A-3, -4) and later (kit part A1, -2) D47366 plate steel drive sprocket; the early spoke and later stamped idler; and early spoke and later stamped road-wheels. Likewise the

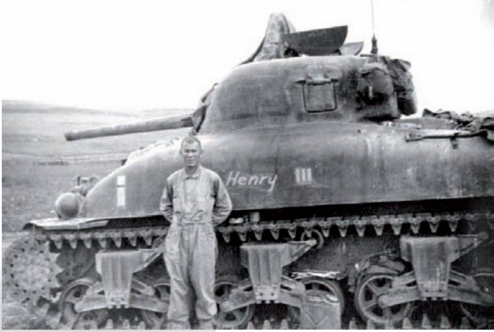
Tank, Medium, M4A1

27 August 1942 revision

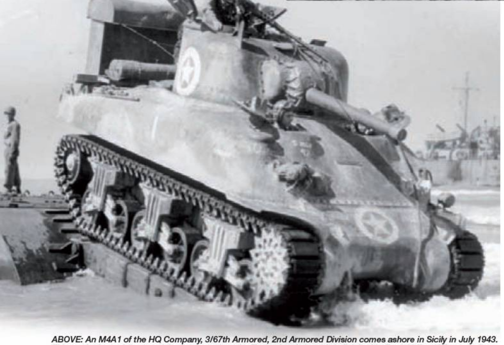


suspension bogie comes with both the early (kit part B17) and later (kit part B16) track skids. Modellers should study photos of the tanks they which to depict to determine which of these options is appropriate to their models.

One of the most visible changes on the M4A1 was the adoption of the improved M34A1 gun mount, which introduced a gunner's telescope sight and had a wide rotor shield (gun mantlet). This began to appear on Pacific Car's M4A1s roughly in February 1943 and on Lima and Pressed Steel M4A1 at the end of March 1943. This option is not provided in the kit, so this dates the kit to roughly the August 1942 - March 1943 production batches, representing the configuration of about 1,000 M4A1 tanks.



One of the subjects of the Tasca decal sheet is 'Henry III', the third tank commanded by Lt.Col. Henry Gardiner who so ably led 2/13th Armored Regiment. He lost his previous M4A1 medium tank, 'Henry II' on 17th February at Sbeitla and 'Henry III' was the replacement. It is a lighter configuration than the Oran M4A1 shown here, and it has the 'Calibre .30 shield' over the co-axial machine gun. (Henry Gardiner)



ABOVE: An M4A1 of the HQ Company, 3/67th Armored, 2nd Armored Division comes ashore in Sicily in July 1943. This particular tank is one of those covered on the Tasca decal sheet. It is finished in Earth Yellow/OD camouflage and is fitted with the 5AITC wading shrouds. BELOW: Another M4A1 of 67th Armored during Operation Husky on Sicily in July 1943 reveals some back detail of the 5AITC wading trunks. I described how to model these wading trunks in my Osprey 'Modelling Guide to the M4 (75mm) Sherman'. (NARA)

Of course, modellers can convert the Tasca kit to the later configuration using existing M34A1 gun mounts available in other kits. I haven't tried to do so, and there may be fit problems as some of the earlier Sherman kits have size issues with their gun mounts.

In the summer of 1943, the US Army decided to upgrade all M4 and M4A1 destined for the European Theatre of Operation with appliqué armour and the M34A1 gun mount and kits were shipped to the UK to tank units already stationed there. As a result, many of the August 1942 - March 1943 M4A1s in US Army service were upgraded. This limits the potential colour schemes available to modellers wishing to build the Tasca kit out-of-the-box. Most 1st Armored Division M4A1s in service in Tunisia in February 1943 during the Kasserine Pass battles were the earliest type with direct-vision hulls and so can't be depicted using the kit. The M4A1 in the kit configuration began to appear as replacements in 2/13th Armored Regiment, 1st Armored Division like 'Major Jim' depicted here and 'Henry III'.

When the 1st Armored Division was refitted prior to the Italian campaign in 1943, they were issued large numbers of M4A1 in the Tasca kit configuration. Likewise, many of the separate tank battalions serving in Italy such as the 191st and 752nd Tank Battalions received M4A1 tanks in this configuration. As a result, late Tunisia campaign and the Italian theatre are the most fruitful source of options for markings for this kit, although there is, of course, the option of tanks being used for training in the US and UK. I've included a number of photos here.

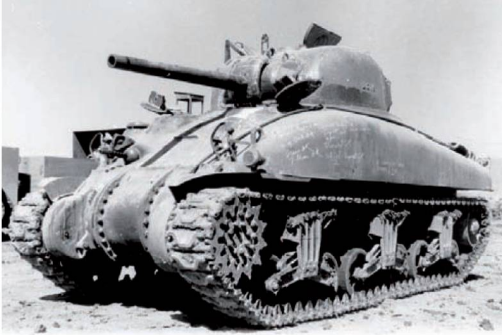
By the time the M4A1 reached the Pacific Theatre of Operations (PTO), most if not all the M4A1s had the M34A1 gun mount. I've included some very early examples of US Marine and Army M4A1 tanks in the PTO as they are very close to the Tasca kit configuration except for the M34A1 gun mount.

Strangely enough, a small number of these mid-production M4A1 ended up in France and Germany in 1944-45. The US Seventh Army was raised in Italy, incorporating separate tank battalions that had been in action in Tunisia and Italy such as the 191st Tank Battalion. These units landed in southern France in the summer of 1944 during Operation *Dragoon* and fought their way through Alsace by the late winter of 1944/45 and into Germany in the spring of 1945. So some of these rare survivors can be seen in action in Germany in the spring of 1945, though in a very limited number of units.

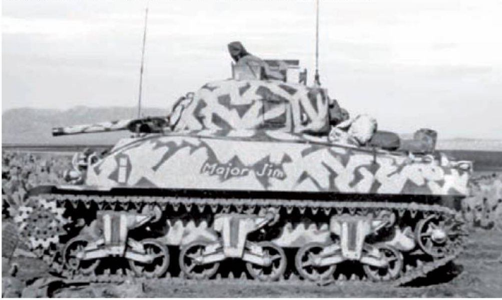
Building Tasca's Model

The 2nd Battalion of the 13th Armored Regiment (2/13th Armored) was the first US Army medium tank battalion to see extensive combat in Tunisia, losing many of its M3 medium tanks during the 'Battle of Happy Valley' and other encounters in December 1942, and was gradually re-equipped with M4A1 tanks. It was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Henry Gardiner, whose third tank, 'Henry III' is depicted in the kit decals as well. The 2/13th Armored was one of the few US tank units to emerge with any credit out of the Kasserine Pass battles, one of the only experienced US tank battalion to take part in the fighting. Years ago, I had corresponded with Colonel Gardiner, so I definitely wanted to do a tank from his unit. However, 'Henry III' is very plainly marked, so I decided to build my model as 'Major Jim', the command tank of Major James Simmerman, executive officer of the 2/13th Armored in the fighting around Kasserine Pass.

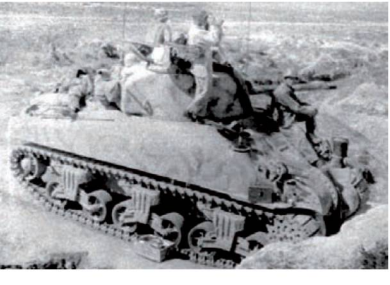
From the photos, 'Major Jim' appears to be a Lima-built tank and definitely had a welded lower hull. To convert this from the kit's riveted hull, the most obvious job is to remove the rivets from the lower hull. However, the welded hull M4A1 also had a different transition piece between the hull rear plate and hull floor. On the Pressed Steel/riveted hull, this is a hard angle, whereas on the Lima/Pacific Car welded hulls, this transition piece is rounded. I found some Evergreen 3/8th inch plastic tubing and cut out a quarter slice for the rounded section, which I attached to the Tasca lower hull. There are also two small rectangular indentations in the Pressed Steel welded hull

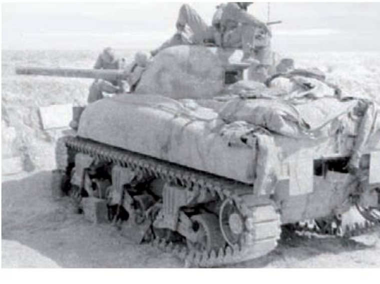


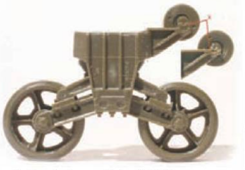
A M4A1 freshly arrived in at the tank depot in Oran in April 1943 prior to being issued to units in Tunisia. This is the configuration that saw combat in Tunisia and has the heavy-duty bogies, three-piece differential cover for the Iowa transmission, siren over the left fender, and initial rotor shield without the collars. (NARA)



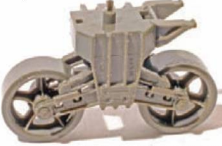
ABOVE: 'Major Jim', the tank of Major James Simmerman, executive officer of 2/13th Armored is another subject included on the Tasca decal sheet. This elaborate splinter camouflage may have been applied with paint or a local mud concoction. (Patton Museum) BELOW LEFT: Although not the best quality, another view of 'Major Jim' from March 1943 taken near Maknassy, Tunisia shows a few details including the second command radio set fitted in the front hull. (Patton Museum) BELOW RIGHT: This rear view of 'Major Jim' shows that it had a modification common on 1st Armored Division medium tanks, a pair of armour plates to protect the vulnerable rear air-filter cans. (Patton Museum)



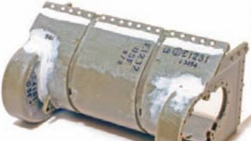




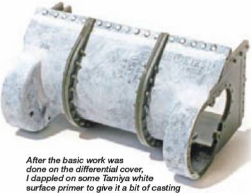
The Tasca bogie assembly is a slightly later configuration with a spacer under the return roller axle. This should be removed if depicting an earlier production tank like 'Major Jim' though the difference is quite small.



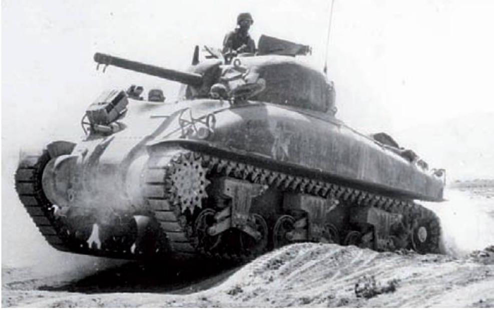
The return roller axle was removed and then a cavity created by removing the spacer using a file. This is delicate work and is probably a concern to only the most die-hard of Sherman nuts.



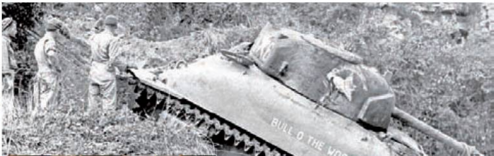
The Tasca three-piece differential housing is nicely done, but the style is not typical of those on Lima M4A1 tanks. I re-did the detail around the bolt strip, added new casting numbers from the Archer decals, and smoothed the joint with the final drive housings.

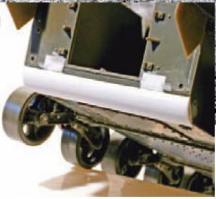


After the basic work was done on the differential cover, I dappled on some Tamiya white surface primer to give it a bit of casting texture and to seal the decals and prevent their damage from the paint and subsequent washes.



ABOVE: Another good example of an M4A1 of the 1st Armored Division in Tunisia in the configuration provided in the Tasca kit. (NARA) BELOW: An M4A1 named 'Bull O' The Woods' is recovered after sliding off a road in Acerno, Italy on 2nd November 1943. This is camouflaged in the Earth Yellow/OD and is an interesting example of a M4A1 with the first vestige of appliqué armour on the right turret front, but without the appliqué on the hull sides. (NARA)



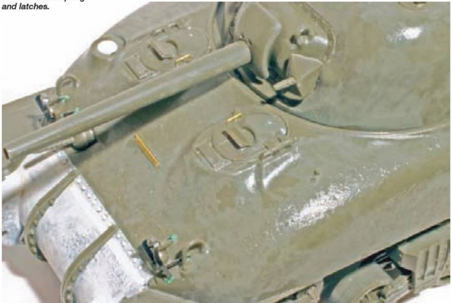


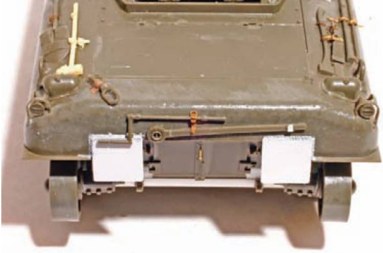
ABOVE: Aside from removing the rivets on the lower hull, the transition piece between the rear hull plate and floor should have a rounded shape. There are also some rectangular indentations found on the Pressed Steel hull plates that were not present on the welded hulls, and I filled these in with .005 plastic sheet. BELOW: The driver hatch detail on the Tasca kit is a slightly later configuration, so I left off the springs and latches.

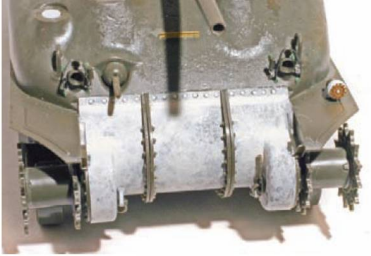
not found on the Lima hull, so I filled these in with a couple of small rectangles of .005 thou plastic sheet.

The kit provides an excellent set of D47527 'heavy' bogies, but they are the later configuration adapted for the later non-reversible track types, distinguished by a 'Y' shaped spacer mounted between the return roller arm assembly and the return roller axle. 'Major Jim' did not have this feature, so I removed it. This takes considerable care, and quite frankly, no one but a hard core Sherman fanatic will ever notice! These spacers were added to permit the use of the new tracks such as the new metal tracks common in Italy, so modellers can avoid this minor correction if depicting later tanks.

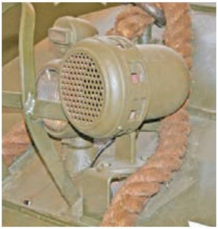
The rest of the lower hull went together out-of-the-box. The casting details on the kit three-piece differential housing are not especially typical of a Lima M4A1, so I modified the kit part by blending in the bolt strip, converted the bolt strip to the style with bolt recesses,



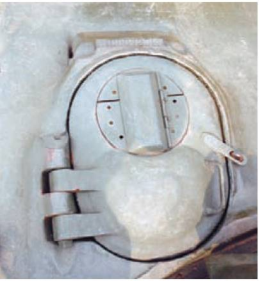




ABOVE LEFT: The 1st Armored Division welded armour plate to the rear of the tank to protect the vulnerable air filters. ABOVE RIGHT: I added Eduard photo-etched brushguards, attached with Kneadatite epoxy putty for better strength, and made my own Mars Signal siren to replace the Federal Type 160A siren provided in the kit.
BELOW: An interesting diorama idea for a brave modeller, a M4A1 of the 1st Armored Division that has slid off a road near Littoria in April 1944. Although lathered in mud, the Allied air identification star can be seen barely visible on the engine deck. (NARA)



Close-up of an example of a Mars Signal & Light Company siren of the type often seen on Shermans in 1942; in this case it is on a M20 armoured car.

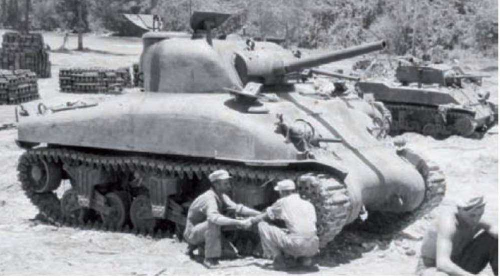


ABOVE: One of the early pattern driver hatches showing the absence of the latches and spring. This particular example is on an earlier M4A1 hull with direct vision, but this configuration continued into the production runs without direct vision ports as is depicted in the Tasca kit.

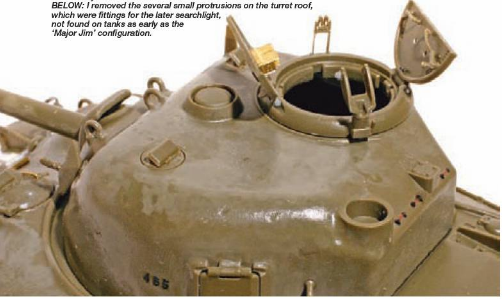
RIGHT: A beaten-up M4A1 lies by the roadside along the Velletri-Casterna road after the heavy fighting there in May 1944 during the Anzio breakout. (NARA)

and changed the casting markings to a more characteristic style. I used the new Archer 'surface detail' decals (AR88007), which unlike most Archer products are water slide decals instead of dry transfers. These provide raised casting numbers and letters, and are easier to use than the traditional method of tiny photo-etch numbers.

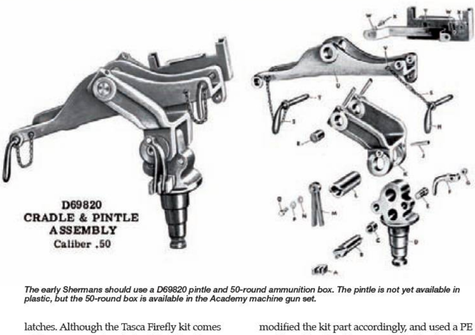
The upper hull is excellent, and I roughed up the surface a little using burrs and some liquid cement to create more of a cast effect. Modellers should be careful of exaggerating these casting effects as US casting techniques in World War II generally left a fairly smooth finish. Unfortunately, many museum Shermans over the years have had layer upon layer of paint slopped on, creating a false impression of casting texture. The one anomaly on the upper hull is the configuration of the drivers' hatches, which are post-February 1943 and not appropriate for 'Major Jim'. This involved leaving off the springs and removing the safety



ABOVE: The M4A1 was used in US Army tank battalions in the south Pacific, but usually in a later configuration than the Tasca kit with the M34A1 gun mount. This example is being serviced by the ordnance detachment of the 1st Cavalry Division on Manus Island in the Admiralties in March 1944.
BELOW: I removed the several small protrusions on the turret roof, which were fittings for the later searchlight, not found on tanks as early as the 'Major Jim' configuration.



For modellers interested in building a Marine M4A1 from the Cape Gloucester fighting, it's worth pointing out that some of the marine tankers were still wearing the old-pattern US tanker's helmets seen here. (NARA)



The early Shermans should use a D69820 pintle and 50-round ammunition box. The pintle is not yet available in plastic, but the 50-round box is available in the Academy machine gun set.

latches. Although the Tasca Firefly kit comes with some very nice photo-etched brush-guards, these are absent on the M4A1 kit so I used Eduard photo-etch, attached using Kneadatite epoxy putty for strength. Like many Lima M4A1s, 'Major Jim' had a Mars Signal Company siren instead of the widely depicted Federal Type 160A (Kit part J-10/-11) so I modified the kit part accordingly, and used a PE part from the Aber Sherman set for the front.

The 1st Armored Division had problems with artillery shrapnel damaging the air filter cans at the rear of the tank, so they welded some armour plate to cover them. I made this from sheet plastic with a bead of putty around the edge to simulate the weld. The kit track is 'glue-able' vinyl. It is fairly nice, though there is the usual faint mould-line along the end connectors and in a few other spots.

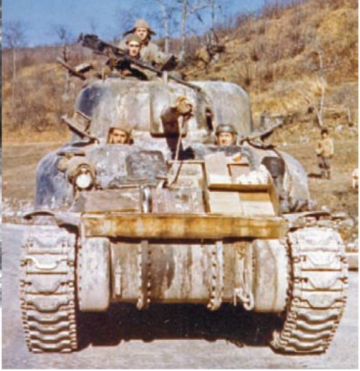
The Tasca turret is extremely good, and captures the overall shape very well. I only made a few minors changes to it. There are three small circular protrusions on the roof that were associated with the new turret searchlight. However, these are a bit late for 'Major Jim', so I smoothed them off. I replaced the small tie-downs on the rear of the turret, and added some raised casting lines along the bottom of the turret bustle using 'dimensional' acrylic paint, which is a thickened acrylic paint used to paint T-shirts. The .50 cal machine gun provided in the kit is the best I have ever seen in plastic. The only problem is that the two pintles provided are later types than the D69820 which was on 'Major Jim' and more typical of this time period. I didn't bother to modify this, but I did substitute a 50-round ammunition box from the Academy US machine gun set which is more typical for this period.

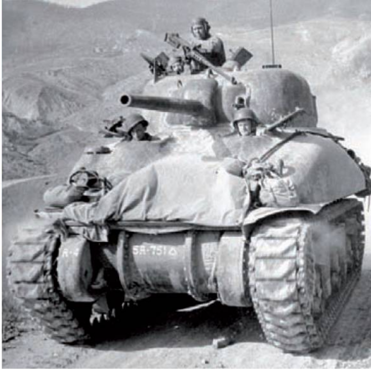
'Major Jim' was a command tank and so had a second radio added in the hull front. It appears to have had a large circular insulator at the base of its antenna, so I made one of these from discs punched out of plastic sheet. The stowage on the rear of tank is a single-piece casting from an old aftermarket set I bought years ago. The tow cable uses the kit loops with Karaya soft copper cable.

Finishing off

'Major Jim' was painted in an attractive splinter pattern. Many 1st Armored Division tanks were painted with local mud, but the finish on 'Major Jim' is so much neater that I suspect it may have been done with paint. In the event, it is a nightmare to paint. I thought about doing it by hand, but I decided instead to mask it for the sake of neatness.

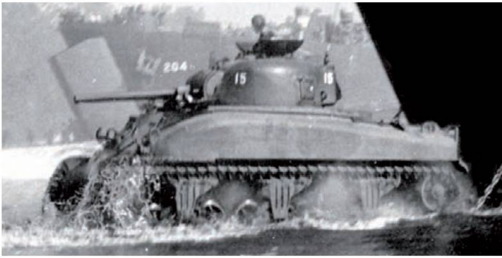
I reverse–masked the finish, meaning that I started out by airbrushing the model in a dull sand colour mixed from Tamiya White XF2 and Dark Yellow XF60 and once the finish was dry, I used Tamiya yellow kabuki hobby tape for the masking. I was especially careful on the left side where there is a clear photo showing





ABOVE LEFT: A 1st Armored Division M4A1 in September 1944 showing the usual OD/Black camouflage under a coat of mud and dust. (NARA) ABOVE RIGHT: Although most of the old M34 gun mounts were replaced on tank battalions in the ETO, the older configuration remained in widespread use in Italy. This is an M4A1 of Company A, 751st Tank Battalion supporting the attack on the Gothic Line by Task Force 92 in mid-October 1944. (NARA)

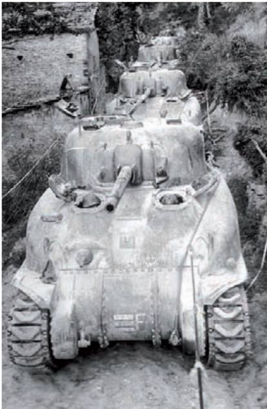
RIGHT: Operation Backhander on New Britain was the only time that the US Marines used the M4A1 in combat. Company A, Marine 1st Tank Battalion was supplied with US Army M4A1 tanks for the Cape Gloucester landings in December 1943 and one is seen coming ashore here from a LST. The usual markings were a speed number carried twice, once on the turret front and once on the rear side. (NARA)

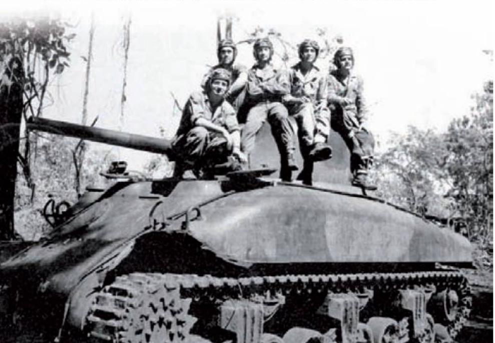


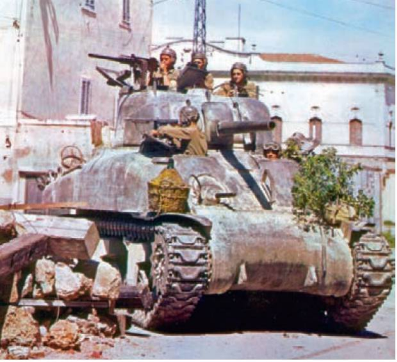
the pattern. I improvised on the other surfaces, as the existing photos are not clear enough to discern the pattern. With the mask in place, I then airbrushed the model in 'scale Olive Drab', Tamiya Olive Drab XF62 lightened with Dark Yellow XF60 in a 60:40 ratio.

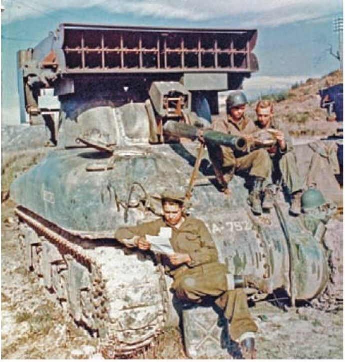
Once the basic finish was complete, I did the various detail painting of tools, wheels and other items and applied the decals. I also did some chipping and distressing of the finish using a fine paintbrush and a dark brown colour pencil to make it appear that the sand colour paint had worn away in places.

RIGHT: A column of M4A1 tanks of the 760th Tank Battalion move forward near Turo on 12th May 1944 along a mine-cleared road. The white tape on either side of the road is an engineer marker to distinguish cleared paths. The coloured bar marking on the transmission cover is a ETOUSA shipping marking commonly used in the Italian theatre, often as a substitute for the regulation bumper codes. This is another example of an M4A1 with the turret appliqué armour, but not the hull side armour, and it has the 'Calibre .30 shield' over the co-axial machine gun. (NARA)
BELOW: Good view of a Marine M4A1 on Cape Gloucester probably finished in OD/Black. Most, if not all, of these tanks had the M34A1 gun mount, but are otherwise similar in configuration to the Tasca kit. (NARA)

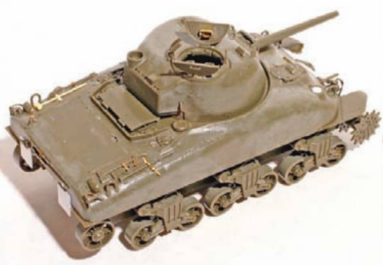


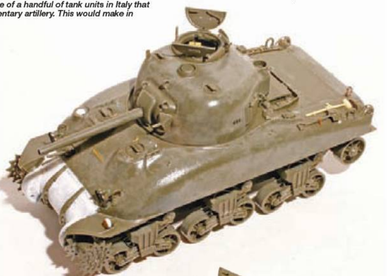




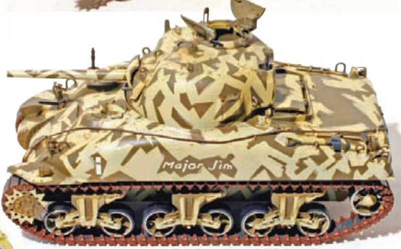


ABOVE LEFT: An interesting colour photo of a M4A1 of the 752nd Tank Battalion in Pisa in August 1944. In contrast to the ETO, US tankers in the Italian theatre preferred metal to rubber block track. (NARA) ABOVE RIGHT: The 752nd Tank Battalion was one of a handful of tank units in Italy that experimented with the T40 7.2-inch demolition rocket launcher as a form of supplementary artillery. This would make in interesting conversion to the Tasca kit! (NARA)



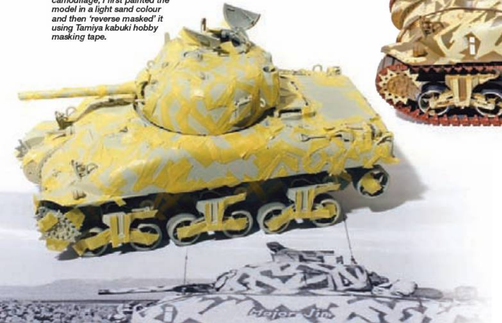


ABOVE: The completed model before painting.

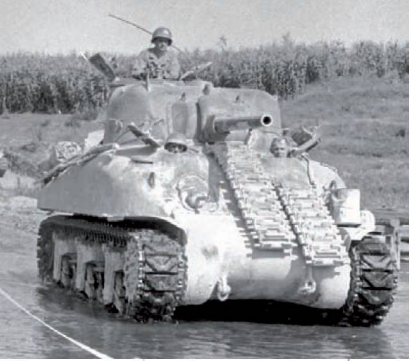


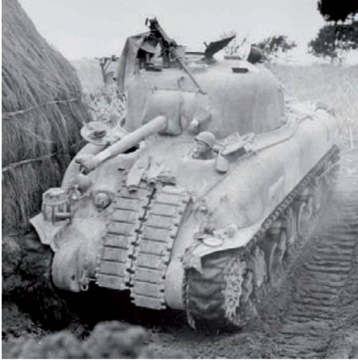
RIGHT: The model with the basic painting and decaling complete. The colours are too garish and have too much contrast, but this will be dealt with by using glazes and washes.

To paint the intricate splinter camouflage, I first painted the model in a light sand colour and then 'reverse masked' it using Tamiya kabuki hobby masking tape.

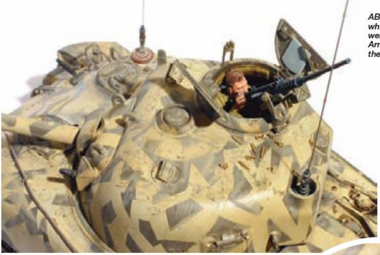


To reduce the harsh contrast of the finish and make it more realistic, I applied a glaze over the model consisting of Tamiya Clear X22 with a small amount of Tamiya Khaki XF49. Once this was dry, I applied a 'light' wash consisting of a Humbrol earth colour lightened with Winsor & Newton Titanium White oil paint in a solution of mineral (white) spirits with an ample dollop

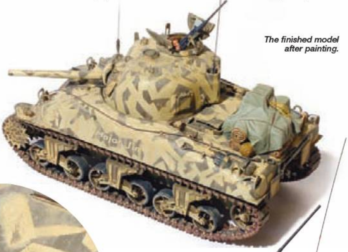




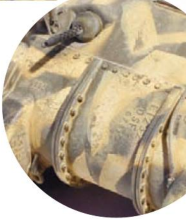
ABOVE LEFT: A 1st Armored Division M4A1 crosses a ford in the Arno River marked with white engineer tape on 1st August 1944. This provides a good example of how spare tracks were used as improvised armour. (NARA) ABOVE RIGHT: A M4A1 of Company F, 13th Armored, 1st Armored Division in the Anzio beachhead on 27th April 1944. It is probably in the usual OD/Black camouflage, but so covered in dust that it is hard to tell. (NARA)



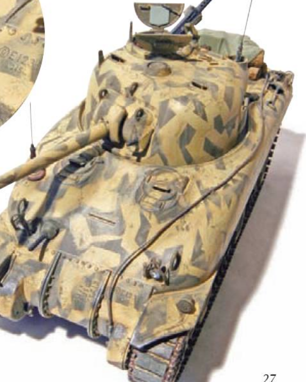
I've always wanted to depict a Sherman with its machine gun on the commander's hatch ring being used in the intended antiaircraft role, and this model was a good opportunity. The figure combines the torso from an old Tamiya set with a Hornet head. The spent .50 cal rounds and belt links are from the Mission Models set.



The finished model after painting.



This close-up of the differential housing shows how effective the new Archer casting decals can be with a little care.



of Winsor & Newton Liquin to serve as a transparent medium to keep more of the wash in place. After this was dry, I did some dry brushing and pin washes to pop out detail.

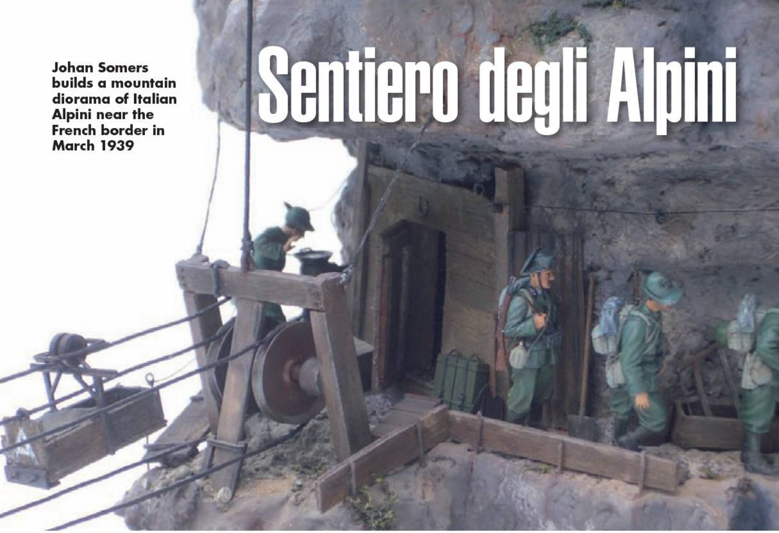
Once everything was complete, I airbrushed Testor's Dullcote to give the model a flat finish, and then added the various 'shiny bits' like MV lenses and periscope faces. The tank commander is from the old Tamiya US Gun & Mortar Team set (Item 35086) with a Hornet head substituted. The main challenge with the figure was to get him to grip the machine gun's handles correctly, and this took considerably thinning of the hands.

In Conclusion

All in all, the Tasca M4A1 was a pleasure to work with, due to the fidelity to detail. This model really shines in its attention to small details such as the tools, hatches, and headlights and is a substantial improvement over the older Dragon M4A1. This is the first Sherman model to get many of these details right. The price tag on the model is a bit high, but so too is the quality of the product. ■

Sentiero degli Alpini

Johan Somers builds a mountain diorama of Italian Alpini near the French border in March 1939



The *Sentiero degli Alpini* or the 'Alpine soldier trail', in the far western area of Liguria is an Italian military route between the mountains Pietravecchia (2,039 metres) and Toraggio (1,971 metres). It was build between 1936 and 1938 in order to stop possible fire from the French front lines in case of a conflict, located along the slopes opposite, on the western versant of the Val Roja. The route, which runs between steep crags, ravines and gorges, was partially dug out of the rock face and made wide enough to allow transport of material, weapons and provisions using mules. The trail becomes difficult and dangerous in winter due to the presence of ice and snow and today, landslides and erosion have deteriorated the route so much that not even a donkey would be able to pass along it.

The Diorama

I like 360° dioramas, which offer an attractive and interesting view when looked at from any direction, however, with a mountain diorama this is much more difficult. Studying photographs of the route, however, showed a location with a sharp U-turn, ideally to offer at least a 270°-view. In addition, one photograph showed a large hole excavated next to the military route, probably to offer shelter and a facility to store equipment. Studying several other period photographs, from both First and Second World Wars gave a lot of ideas to expand the diorama in a more interesting way:

1. Italian mountain troops often made primitive shelters or small barracks from wood on the mountain, which were equipped with tables, chairs, stoves, etc.

The outstanding Model Victoria Alpini figures and mule, and the two Hornet figures, a Carabinieri and an Alpini. The figures fit together easily and are very well detailed. The resin Hornet figure comes with a white metal M91/38 carbine (Moschetto per Cavalleria).

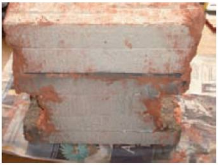
2. Provisional cable cars were made, often very primitive in construction to transport goods or wounded men to or from the mountain. These were powered at their mountain or valley locations, either manually or sometimes machine driven.

3. Mule transports were another way to foresee in the required supply of materials and provisions.

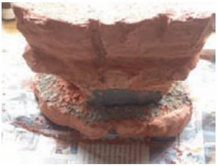
Mountain Troops Figures

Several manufactures have releases Italian *Alpini* (mountain troops) soldiers in 1:35 scale, including Model Victoria and Hornet, in either resin or white metal. Model Victoria also offers a mule with its load that is ideal to put in a mountain scene. I planned to use seven figures to show the 'action' on the diorama; five resin *Alpini* from Model Victoria, and a white metal *Alpini* and a resin *Carabinieri* figure from Hornet. The *Alpini* wore an Italian model 1933 steel helmet and grey-green hat called a *Cappello* with a feather on the left side. The feather holder on the hat was in the colour of the battalion; i.e. white, red or green for the 1st, 2nd or 3rd regiment.

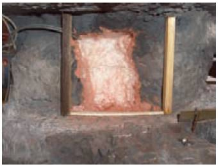
The mountain troops had the same uniform as regular infantry, apart from their large rucksacks and larger two-litre canteens. The grey-green tunic had two pointed collar flame patches in 'alpine green' with a silver star. Boots were black or brown. It's a pity that the Hornet and Model Victoria *Alpini* figures are not equipped with the common axe/hoe combination tool or the capes that were popular garments for these troops.

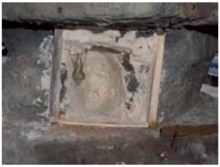


The rear side of the mountain shows the different glued together layers of EPS. A thick piece of carbon covered with black plastic (taken from a binder and cut into shape) was later glued on top and at the rear to cover the EPS material.



ABOVE: Front view. The road itself was covered with old cement with a grained structure, glued with PVA glue and sprinkled with water to make it rock hard. Ideally, all figures and accessories are now pressed into the groundwork to integrate them better with the groundwork. They are then removed and glued in place with PVA after all the painting, etc. has been finished. Note the horizontal layers, evidence of geologic forces and the vertical fracture above and below the route. The left side has the excavated shelter. BELOW: The mountain received its base coat of Acrylic Raw Umber.





Well into making the scenery I had the idea to create a small barrack and cable car end station, which wasn't good planning. The existing small cave was made larger and the base of the rock was given an extension with EPS to install the cable car station. Everything was then covered with plaster and painted. The outer frame of the barrack was made with wood strips and a small light bulb put inside it.

The *Carabinieri* were the Italian military police and were responsible for the control and discipline of military personal, control of public order, and were sometimes engaged as fighting units. Their typical headdress was a grey-green hat, called the *Lucerna*. The grey-green tunic had a black collar and collar patches with silver wire double bars and silver stars. Weapons used by Italian forces were the M91 *Carcano* rifle, mainly at the beginning of the war, and later the M91/38 cavalry carbine and the M41 rifle.

Rocky Mountain Construction

The mountainside was built with several layers of pieces of expanded polystyrene (EPS) glued together. After carving the route through the mountain 'rock', it was covered with modelling plaster. Again, looking at photographs gave some hints to the geological formation and colours to be used later on. After the plaster had dried, the entire rock received a base coat of Amsterdam Raw Umber acrylic applied with a large brush. (I did not use an airbrush during the entire project!)

The rear side of the mountain revealed the layers of EPS glued together so it was finished with a thick piece of carbon covered with black plastic (taken from a binder and cut into shape) and glued on top and at the rear to cover the EPS material.

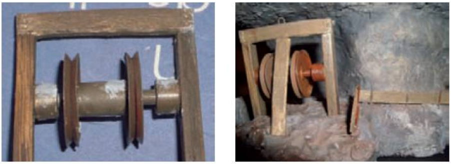
The road itself was covered with old cement with a grained structure, glued with PVA glue and sprinkled with water to make it rock hard. Ideally, at this stage, all figures and accessories should now be pressed into the groundwork to integrate them with it, then removed until they could be permanently glued into place with PVA after all the painting, etc., was completed. Note the horizontal layers in the photo, evidence of geologic forces, and the vertical fracture above and below the route. At this stage I made an excavated shelter on the left side.

I gave the 'mountain' a base coat of Raw Umber acrylic. The rocks were then painted with artists' oil colours, in a mixture of several tones of Cassel Earth, white and Burnt Sienna. Later on, they were given washes of turpentine mixed with Paynes Grey, black, Cassel Earth and Burnt Sienna to create variations in tone and depth. Special attention was paid to the different horizontal geological layers, which were given a slightly different shade of the overall colour.

It was only at this stage that I had the idea to create a small barrack and cable car end station (bad planning!) so the existing small cave was made larger and the base of the rock was given an extension with EPS to install the cable car station. Everything was then covered with plaster and painted.

The outer frame of the barrack was made with wood strips and fixed into place with a small light bulb inside it. Using artificial light can give a special dimension to a diorama, but it could easily cause 'overkill' and look unnatural if too many bright LEDs (Light Emitting Diodes) were used. However, a small background light in a house or cave, from a concealed light bulb usually works and lends atmosphere. Some furniture and a blanket in the shelter would be otherwise have been invisible without the light.

ABOVE: Night on the mountain… BELOW: Left: the initial construction. Tamiya putty was used to fill the holes. Right: put in place already. A small U-iron on top and two side hooks from the spare box were glued in place. These will be used to install the supporting cables going from the station to the rock. The planks – seen on a period First World War period photograph - offer some limited safety.



Cable Car

The cable car is power-driven from the valley, so it would just be a simple mountain station with two pulley wheels for two powered cables going downwards. The construction would have to be strong enough to support the weight of the load and cables and needed to be firmly attached to the rock with supporting cables. The mountain station was made from four small pieces of wood, one axle rod, three cylinders and two gear wheels from a Meccano/Erector construction set. The construction is quite simple and was assembled with PVA glue and super glue. With a sharp tool, holes were made for the nails where the planks are connected to each other.

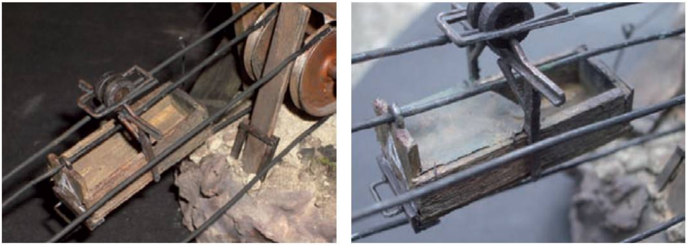
The wooden and metal parts were painted using a large brush with a Humbrol base coat and after a dry time I gave it a few washes of panzer grey (Humbrol thinned with turpentine) and a wash with Burnt Sienna oil colour. The nail holes were painted darker to contrast with the surface of the wood. This was all dry-brushed with a bit of white, grey and brown mixed together to create more depth and the effects of weathering. Finally, European Dust pigment was applied to create a texture. (See later).

One of the three hooks attached to the rock and cable made from an electrical wire support the station.

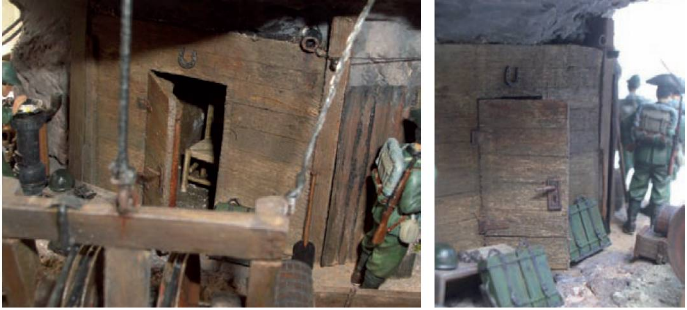
The cable car itself was made from wood and several bits and pieces from the spares box. The small wheel is from an old Esci Italian Fiat-Ansaldo M13-40 tank. The wheel is protected with a rectangular framework, which came from Tamiya's 1:35 scale *SdKfz 250/3 Greif* kit. The cables are black painted electrical wires. The metal frame that is attached to the cable car was made from small pieces of plastic frame cut into shape. The letter 'A' painted in white on front of the cable car and above a handle is a nice 'eye catcher', together with the canvas cover. The top pulley wheel on the cable car runs over a static main cable, while the car itself is fixed to a live cable rolling over the pulley wheel on the mountain station.

Small Barrack

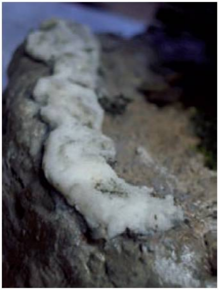
The small barrack was made from a small piece of wood that came from packaging material. (Actually it was a small crate for oysters, so there's your excuse for buying some in larger quantities!) It already had a nice in-scale wood grain structure. The wooden planks were put horizontally, similar to those seen in period pictures. It is actually one small piece of wood with a doorway cut out. A knife was used to simulate the individual planks and the door is reinforced with a wooden frame on its inner side. Next to the door is a corrugated plate made from the stiff corrugated card spacing often found between the outer and inner sides of stout cartons or flat sheets used for packaging. It was painted a metallic grey and then dry-brushed with different shades of red/rust.



The cable car itself was made from wood and several bits and pieces from the spares box. The top pulley wheel on the cable car runs over a static main cable, while the car itself is fixed to a live cable rolling over the pulley wheel on the mountain station.

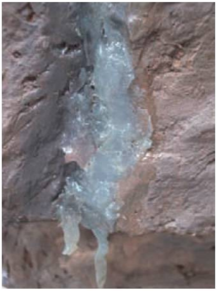


The small barrack was made from a small piece of wood that came from packaging material. It is actually one small piece of wood with a doorway cut out. Some light grey was used on the upper half to simulate the metallic parts.



The frozen water was formed from Vallejo 'Still Water', mixed with blue acrylic paint, whereas snow was made with a mixture of Sodium Bicarbonate, PVA glue and a few drips of water.

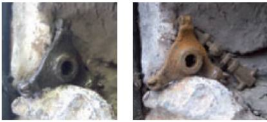
Some light grey was used on the upper half to simulate the metallic parts. The fixed supporting cables were put in place and most items painted their initial colours, then the tools, accessories and vegetation added. The vegetation is small pieces of moss from the garden, covered with PVA glue and carefully put into place on selected locations. After it had dried, the plants were dry-brushed with different shades of green and a little brown to prevent any colour loss over time.



Snow and Ice

As my diorama is meant to represent a period in early March, the heat of the sun would be increasing and snow and ice melting away, but it would still be cold enough during the day and especially at night to have a lot of patches frozen water and a bit of snow remaining. In order to represent a frozen stream of water formed by melting snow higher up the mountain, I used Vallejo 'Still Water', mixed with blue acrylic paint. I mixed the paint with the water and poured it into aluminium foil, which was treated with olive oil, so it could be easily removed when the water hardened. It took nearly two days to become more or less soft and the aluminium foil was removed. Because the water was not yet completely hardened, it could be torn apart and shaped into the cavity were it was to be placed. A small piece of this material twisted round a few times provided an excellent icicle. Everything was glued in place and covered with an additional layer of acrylic paste; otherwise nothing was painted.

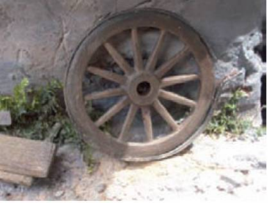
The snow was made with a mixture of Sodium Bicarbonate, PVA glue and a few drips of water. The snow had to appear dirty and nearly all melted away, so an irregular form was shaped with some holes and hollow areas. Grey and blue-grey oil paint was used at the edges of the snow and in the holes. After it had all dried, acrylic gloss medium was sparsely applied on the snow and traces of melting water painted on as if running down the rock.



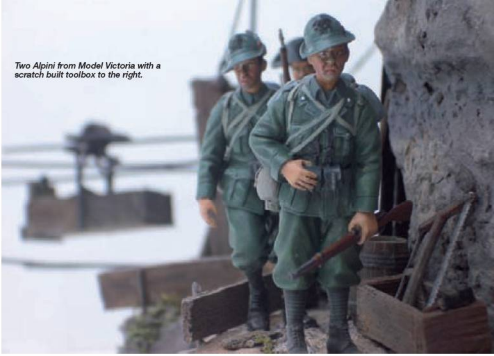
MIG Productions' Light Rust pigment of was used to obtain the heavily corroded surfaces. Here a before and after image.

Pigments

When most of the painting was finished, pigment powders were used to create dirt, rust, etc., and to weather the environment. Pigments can be applied dry on a matt surface that will hold the powder or they can be used with a combination of thinners, turpentine, alcohol or water on gloss surfaces, or to create special effects. Pigments from MIG Productions were used which already have the correct colour combinations to create many effects, although most hobby stores sell other types of pigments or chalk powder which can be used as well.



The Historex wheel was covered with 'European Dust pigment'. It was painted with a undercoat of Humbrol Beige, then several layers of Burnt Sienna oil paint and washes with Cassel Earth. The inside of the wheel spokes received a darker tone that the middle area. Lead foil was put around the rim of the wheel to represent the broken tyre.



Two Alpini from Model Victoria with a scratch built toolbox to the right.

This soldier (Model Victoria) is rather excited about his next meal and hopefully the eggs will taste good!

ABOVE: Alpini tend to their mule. BELOW: Hornet's Alpini.

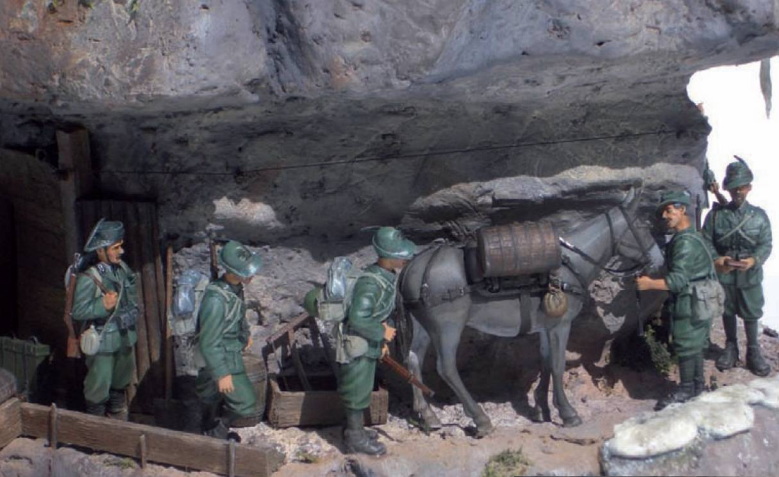
Hornet's Carabinieri.

Alpini

The figures were assembled and putty used where needed. All figures were relatively free from flash, with very crisp and detailed mouldings and at this stage it was important to verify that all moulding seams and resin residue or white metal flash has been removed completely before painting began. It often helps me to make a digital photograph of a figure and enlarge the picture using a computer to spot any issues needing attention.

After cleaning the figures in a warm bath of soap, the first thin base coat can be applied. I usually begin with a Humbrol base coat that is the same colour as the skin, the uniform or the equipment it will eventually become. After letting it all dry for at least 24 hours, I paint the entire figure with oil colours. Flesh areas were painted with a mix of white, Burnt Sienna and Naples Yellow, with heavy shadows in Raw Umber and lighter shadows with Burnt Sienna or a darker tone of the base skin colour.

Highlights were achieved with a bit of white on the nose, cheekbones and nostrils. A five o'clock shadow dry-brushed with Paynes Grey and a bit of red on the cheeks and lips gives some more colour. Hair was painted with a mix of black and Raw Umber and dry-brushed with a bit of white. The uniform, helmet and hat are all painted green (Humbrol Matt Dark Green 30), but photographs show a lot of differences in tone, either more grey or more greenish, which was



Alpini and their mule followed by a Carabinieri wend their way around Sentiero degli Alpini - the 'Alpine Soldiers' Trail'.

achieved with mixtures of Terre Verte, Paynes Grey and white. Highlights were made with Vert Anglais Clair + white + Paynes Grey.

It's important that the figures tell as story and are put on the diorama so everything is balanced and some time can be easily spent trying to find the best composition. I posed a soldier (Model Victoria) standing near the small stove waiting for the eggs to fry. This soldier is rather excited about his next meal and hopefully the eggs will taste good! The eggs were represented inside of the pan with a patch of unthinned white oil colour with the bright yellow yokes made from tiny blobs of bright yellow oil paint. Care must be taken to get the thick yellow oil paint yokes slightly rounded on top and not pointed. The six other soldiers were posed ready to go with the mule at the other side of the route.

Conclusion

I had a lot of fun with this project. Planning and making drawings are always good practices, but ideas and inspiration can cause some rebuilding during the process and I had to enlarge the cave into a larger hole to accommodate the cable car station and to make more room inside the barrack. This was the first time I used pigments on a diorama and I'm very excited about it. It will now be come part of my standard set of products to use.

I was very pleased with the figures from Hornet and Model Victoria, both of which have some more promising figures in their product range. Victoria Models also make Italian WW2 vehicles, which will be part of my next modelling project

Availability

Stove from Verlinden Productions. Smaller accessories (hand saw, wheel, shovel, etc., from Historex Spares) and Hornet 1:35 scale WWII Italian Alpini Mountain Trooper and WW2 Italian Carabinieri. Available in the UK from Historex Agents, Wellington House, 157 Snargate Street, Dover, Kent CT17 9BZ. Tel: 01304 206720. Fax: 01304 204528.
sales@historex-agents.co.uk
www.historexagents.com
Model Victoria: Italian Alpini with mule; Italian Alpini Captain and Private; Italian Alpino Going On and Load for Alpini mule. Model Victoria, v. Chiamanis 15, 33038 S. Daniele (UO) Italy. Tel: (0) 432 954224 ■

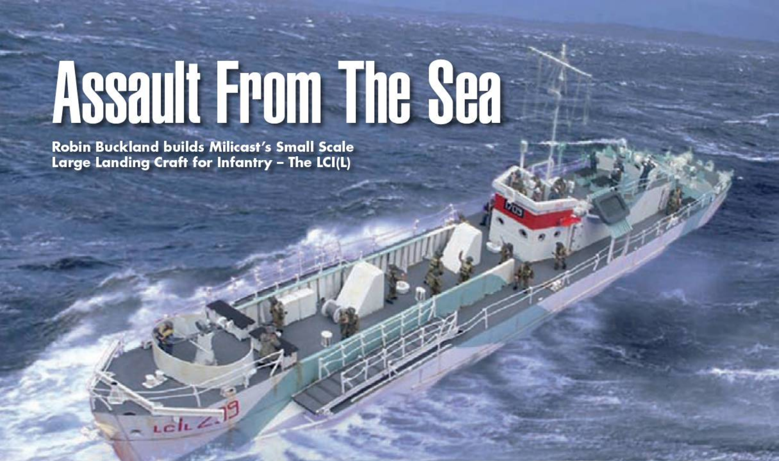
View from the left side of the diorama looking down the trail to the small barrack and cable car station.

Sources

Il cappello alpino da truppa durante la seconda guerra mondiale, http://www.glialpini.com/cappelloalpini_seconda.html
La Stada degli Alpini, http://www.nebuloni-tiziano.it/Dolomiti_di_Sesto/Strada_degli_Alpini/la_strada_degli_alpini.htm

Assault From The Sea

Robin Buckland builds Milicast's Small Scale Large Landing Craft for Infantry – The LCI(L)



TOP: Milicast's 1:76 scale LCI(L) completed and painted with crew and troops set on a stormy sea.
ABOVE: LCI(L) 252 preparing to head onto Juno Beach on D-Day. (CFJIC via Ed Storey)

The saga of the Landing Craft during the Second World War is actually quite a story in itself. You could think back to the dark days of 1940 and the fall of France with the evacuation of the BEF from Dunkirk and the RAF holding out through the Battle of Britain. The country survived. Things were not going well elsewhere, especially in the Middle East once the *Afrika Korps* arrived and with Japan advancing in the Far East. December, of course, saw the 'Day of Infamy', as the US Pacific Fleet was attacked at Pearl Harbor.

Even more remarkable then was the foresight among some, most notably Lord Louis Mountbatten as Commander of Combined Operations, that there would come a time when the Allies would need to land troops back onto the shores of France, amongst other places. Capable landing craft would be needed, in large numbers, and the ideas were voiced at that time. In Britain work began on the building of tank landing craft, however, Britain's industrial capacity was being pushed to the limit by that stage of the war.

As America entered the war, so the world really began to see the industrial might of that country come to the fore with the design of an Infantry landing Craft, with capacity to spend 48 hours at sea, loaded with 200 troops, and have a draught shallow enough to land those troops straight onto the beaches. This was what was needed to put foot soldiers back into Europe. The challenge of building Landing Craft Infantry (Large), or LCI(L), was given and the first were built at the Barber Yard of the New Jersey Shipbuilding Co. This in itself was a tale; a disused asphalt yard was found and cleared, and a new shipyard was built using production units around America. The first was setup near New York, where a site was found in early 1942. It was cleared of the old plant and the slipways were laid all within a period of three months.

The prefabricated sections of the LCIs were built some 14 miles inland of the shipyard, and moved in on railway flat cars for transport to the yard for final assembly. Positioned in special cradles, the main sections were then welded together at the first stage on their warship production line. The completed hull was moved to the next position for the deckhouse to be welded into place, then on again for the pilot house, and electrical and other services before going on to final fitting out. It was a great example of adapting the existing methods for car production lines, pioneered in America, and American industrial might soon flexed its muscles and showed itself ready to the task.

The first two craft were actually launched in November 1942, and the rate increased to 10 craft a month by February 1943. This process was repeated elsewhere on the major US rivers, as more sub-contractors came on line. I do wonder if they could go from first design drawings, creating new shipbuilding yards and getting the first vessel into the water in less than 11 months today? I suspect not, unless the necessities of war made it as urgent as it was back then.

Even the LCI(L)'s power plant showed how the Americans could adapt available resources. It used no less than eight truck diesel engines; four coupled to each of the two propeller shafts, with the power transferred to the shaft by large inflated tyre-like rollers. Was anything else particularly unusual? Well, I suspect many sailors then were surprised to find no ship's wheel. Instead they had a tram-handle type steering lever! Ultimately, this appears to have been a neat and simple solution to use with power assisted steering.

ABOVE: LCI(L) 125 returning from Juno Beach through lanes of smaller craft heading for it. Other larger landing craft can be seen on the beach and one is flying a barrage balloon. (CFJIC via Ed Storey)

INSET RIGHT: LCI(L) 118 of the 2nd Canadian (262nd Royal Navy) Flotilla under way and carrying troops. (CFJIC via Ed Storey)

The first 350 craft were built to the original design, and later ones had a deckhouse that stretched the full width of the hull. Of this 350 there were two main types; the lower bridge marked out the British and Canadian LCIs, while a higher tower was a common recognition feature of US-operated examples. After the first 350 built, the production total went up to over 1,000 examples, but these later craft had a much wider deckhouse, the full width of the hull, though they still carried the two bow ramps to disembark troops. Finally, they put in an internal, centre line, double-width ramp instead of the two external ramps, which allowed troops to disembark at the same rate, but with the added protection of less exposure to small arms fire as they came ashore.

The LCI(L) saw action in North Africa, during Operation *Torch*, then again in Sicily and of course at Normandy as well as across the Pacific. A total of 913 were built as personnel carriers, of which 220 went to the Royal Navy, while another 30 were supplied to Russia. A further 337 LCI(L) hulls were finished as other specialized craft, such as for Underwater Demolition Teams, and others as gunboats and command/control craft.

LCI(L)299

From the options given in Milicast's 1:76 scale kit, I chose to finish my model as the LCI(L)299, which landed on *Juno* Beach in June 1944. Built at the New Jersey Shipbuilding Yard, Barber NJ, LCI(L) 299 never saw service in the US Navy, being transferred directly to Britain and the Royal Navy in January 1943, as part of the Lend Lease programme. It was commissioned into the Royal Canadian Navy in January 1944 and served only in the European theatre of operations. It landed the Stormont Dundas Glengarrian Highlanders of Canada onto *Juno* Beach and a number of photos show it within sight of one of the most recognizable houses on that section of beach, and which today carries Canadian flags and memorials in memory of the landings.

Unfortunately the craft was mined on its port side, putting holes in both the engine room and mess deck and badly damaged, it was de-commissioned by the Canadian Navy in September 1944, and returned to the US Navy in March 1946. In that same year it was given to France, who used it as a source of spare parts before it was finally scrapped.

LCI(L) 125 about to hit the beach at Bernieres-sur-Mer. (via Ed Storey)

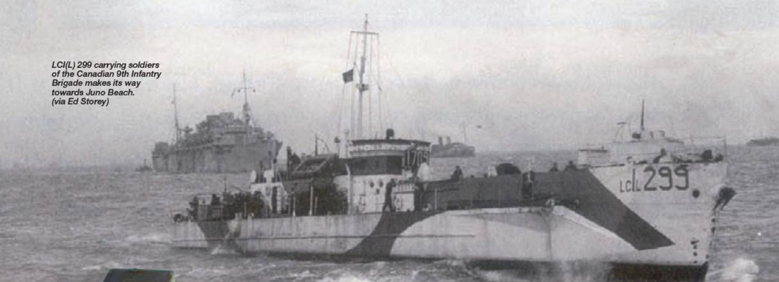
Model Landing Craft

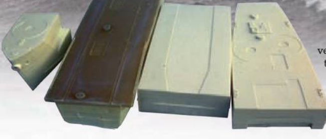
I don't know about you, but my first real memory of a Landing Craft model was the old Airfix LCM (Landing Craft Mechanized), complete with their Sherman tank kit that for many years was as far as it went. More recently both Dragon and Trumpeter have released their own versions of this smaller craft. I equally remember the paper plans included in the short-lived Almark Publishing's *Modelworld* magazine in the early 1970s, which had a plan to copy, paste onto card and then fold together to make an LCA. It actually worked really very well, and I still have two of those card models today.

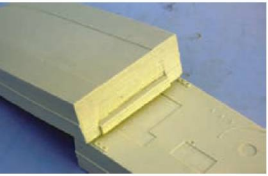
Then Airfix released an LCVP, or 'Higgins boat' just a couple of years ago, but despite all that, however, by far the largest variety of Landing Craft come in the range of 1:76 scale cast resin models by Milicast of Glasgow. In addition to the LCI(L), they list the LCA, the LCM Mark I, the LCM Mark III (in both full hull and waterline), both UK and US types of LCP(Large), the US style LCP(Ramped) and the LCVP, with all of the latter having either waterline or full hull options.

The LCI(L)

When you first see the Milicast kit box you can be forgiven for wondering how a long-hulled model can fit in a short brown cardboard box. Well the answer is simple enough, because the main waterline hull is made up from four, quite large castings, which need to be cleaned up a little, and then fitted together. Shrinkage in the resin casting process can mean the need for a little filler and then sanding flush, and getting it as level as you can. Actually I found this was not difficult, and the four sections went together rather well, with only a minimum of filler and sanding needed. In many ways this is, of course, a similar method of 'prefabrication' as was used for building the real thing.


LCI(L) 299 carrying soldiers of the Canadian 9th Infantry Brigade makes its way towards Juno Beach. (via Ed Storey)


The four pieces of cast polyurethane resin that make up the hull of Milicast's kit.


The hull sections butt together with a keyed section on the bottom edges.

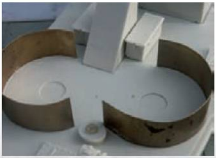
While the assembled hull is on one side, it leaves you the chance to explore what else is in the box awaiting construction. There are a number of poly bags which contain the various groups of parts, plus a large photo etched brass sheet with additional parts, plus a full sheet of waterslide transfers, produced by Aleran in the USA, for which Milicast is the main UK dealer. There are optional conning towers, so you can have either the lower 'British style' bridge or the taller US Navy type. One complete bag contains a series of two bench seats, which were intended for use by the troops on board, but in practice these were rarely used on operations, so may be left off. Although they could add some additional interest to the finished model, they are not apparent in most of the reference photos I have looked at, so I left them off.

The instruction booklet has written instructions, along with assembly sketches to guide you and this has been prepared by Danny Taylor, who mastered the model, and very good they are too. Add to this three, colour printed A4 sheets to show side views of six alternatives for camouflage and markings, plus the last sheet with a plan view to indicate the positioning for all the side rail stanchions and cleats.

Construction is shown as a logical sequence, and gives you options on the low UK or higher US style bridge, UK or US style ventilators, early or late type infantry landing ramps, the fitting of seats as already mentioned, and a choice of style for the mountings on the life rafts fitted to either side of the deck house. My own choice was not to fit the seats, and to go for the low UK type bridge and the more elaborate fittings for the life rafts.

Once the hull is together, add the deckhouse and your chosen style of bridge, in my case this being the low UK style. The etched brass fret has the supports for the splashguard to fold and fit around the top of the bridge, in the marked positions, and clearly illustrated in the instructions. On top of them go the two main etch brass splashguards themselves. Don't forget, these vessels had an open bridge, a feature still common in ships of the period. Not my idea of fun in foul weather I have to admit. Staying with etched brass, fit the portholes and the two brackets onto either side for the navigation light supports. Within the bridge itself, the binnacle and some pipe work alongside plus a seat on the rear plate are all there is to be fitted. There are some hatches to be fitted at this stage too, and I just advise careful checking on the numbers of the two different sizes and to check the assembly instructions for which ones fit where. They

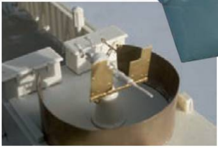
LCI(L)'s 276 and 118 loaded up with Canadian troops at Portsmouth. These LCIs are part of 2nd Canadian (262nd Royal Navy) Flotilla. (via Ed Storey)


ABOVE: The stern Oerlikon positions have photo etched brass walls – the etched parts will fit easier if they are heated and rapidly cooled – annealed to remove the 'spring' in the metal.

BELOW: LCI(L) 250 on Juno Beach. (via Ed Storey)

ABOVE: LCI(L) 252 disembarks Canadian troops down its ramps onto Juno Beach. (via Ed Storey)

INSET RIGHT: The hull sections assembled.



The bow gun position with 20mm Oerlikon mounted.

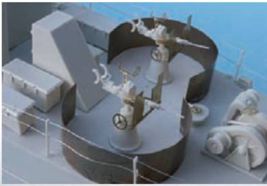
look the same but there are two sizes. Yes, I nearly did make the mistake.

The final part of the main structure is the four sections of the Bulwarks, which fit along the troop space. In a number of photos you can see this area filled with kit, such as bicycles, for the troops carried. Make sure you check which one goes where! Just one has a couple of lockers moulded integrally, and these had the only examples of air bubbles I found anywhere in the kit. I filled these with Green Stuff and before fitting them. At the same time add the forward etched ladder, plus some hatches with their small, etched brass hand wheels.

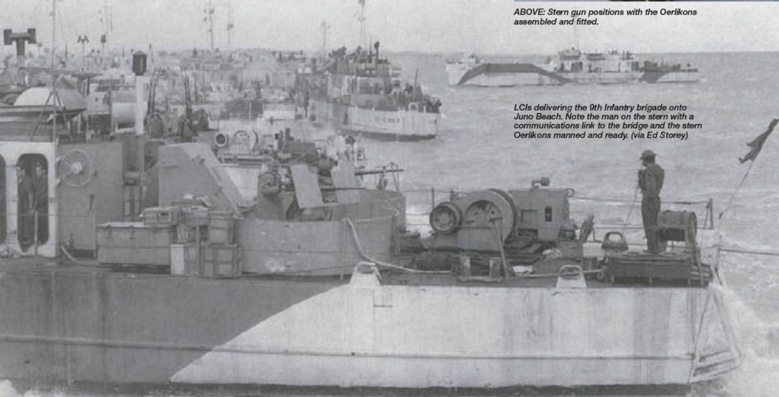
Oerlikons

The LCI(L) had four 20mm Oerlikon gun positions. One forward at the bow, one on top of the deckhouse and two more on the after deck. The positions are clearly marked on the deck casting, to which you fit the etched brass circular shields. Heat the etched brass sheet in a flame (I use a ring on the gas cooker in the kitchen) and then plunge it into cold water to cool it and then allow it to dry it off. This annealing process doesn't harm the brass in any way, but it does take the 'spring' out of it and so it stays where you form it, in this case into a smooth round curve. I used a piece of dowel to rub along the brass while it sits on a cutting mat and the softer annealed brass has enough 'give' in it to help form the curve. As the part gets to the correct diameter you can glue it into place on the deck and find that super glue will hold it around the ridge that locates it to he deck. As the brass has no tension, it stays where you put it. I hope I've described that process all right, but it certainly works for me.

The hull section joints need a certain amount of filling to give flush sides to the hull.



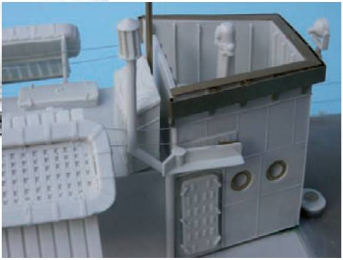
ABOVE: Stern gun positions with the Oerlikons assembled and fitted.



LCIs delivering the 9th Infantry brigade onto Juno Beach. Note the man on the stern with a communications link to the bridge and the stern Oerlikons manned and ready. (via Ed Storey)

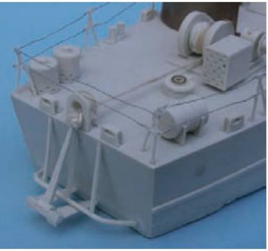
The fate of many a landing craft – US LCI(L) 92 lies aground and battered on Omaha Beach long after D-Day. (USCG)

ABOVE: The LCI's starboard side raft.



RIGHT: The bridge has etched brass parts for the coaming. Note the scuttles have etched brass riveted rims in true nautical style.

LEFT: The stern has some fine cast on details.



The large stern anchor and its winch gear were necessary to enable the LCI to back off the beach after disembarking troops. This anchor was released as the vessel neared the shore.

The Oerlikon guns are little works of art in their own right. The main parts are resin; the pedestal, the gun cradle, the gun itself, magazine, and shoulder brackets, while the hand wheel on the pedestal, the gun shield and supports plus the ring sight are all etched brass. I did leave the should brackets off one gun, as I wanted to fit one of the gunners from a set of excellent resin cast figures that Milicast do separately. Once the guns are made up, they are fixed into position within their gun tubs. The ammo bins and spare barrel boxes are fitted using the drawing which has measurements to guide you, though these are not too strict as they varied a fair bit from ship to ship.

Since the release of the LCI(L) kit, the 20mm Oerlikon gun, including the pedestal mount and a resin version of the gun shield, has been released into the Milicast range of accessory sets. This, plus the gun crew set could make an interesting little scene by itself.

Anchor Winch

The whole design of the LCI(L), along with other types of landing craft, is that the weight is mainly at the back, giving a deeper draught at the rear and a shallower draught at the bow, where you want to run it up onto the beach. The next trick, of course, is to get back out to sea again. To assist with this a large stern anchor is fitted, which was dropped on the final run in to the landing. Once the troops disembarked, then the rear winch would pull on that anchor and so pull the craft back off the beach and into deeper water. This, along with the guard rails that help keep the winch cable away from the propellers that lurk below, are resin castings which fit neatly into place. The winch is made up, adding a piece of plastic rod and an etched brass hand wheel. Use some twine as the hawser from the winch onto the anchor itself. Some smoke floats are also included to be mounted on the stern, near the winch.

Bow and Ramp fittings

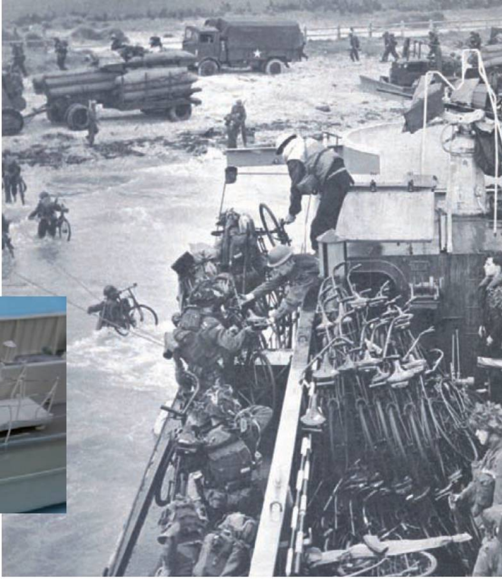
The bow section has some interesting shapes to it, and has the rollers for launching the landing ramps on each side, plus what is known as the Cathead, which held the tackle for launching the ramps. The instructions advise you to remove the tackle if the cathead is in the stowed position, but some photos I've seen also show them left in place, so make your own choice. There is also a smaller bow anchor to be fitted here, but I left this off until the last minute, as the two side arms are very fine and fragile, and would easily break off while you handled the model during construction. The ramps themselves were straightforward enough. Drill the sides to fit the handrail stanchions and fit the underside hooks at the fore end. These fit onto the retaining bar at the forward edge of the hull, to support the ramp when it is deployed.

Ship's Rails

Now, I was pleased to get his done, but I have to admit that some rather bad language was heard from time to time as I went about this particular little task of assembling the side rails. The instructions suggest using 3amp fuse wire for the rails on the stanchions. I used a fine beading wire, bought in a local craft shop that works well in many ways. It looks fine enough for scale, and it glues in easily enough with super glue. Once the wire is fitted, it also adds strength for the fine resin support stanchions, but there are two potential 'howevers'. Firstly, it didn't fix as straight as it could, but looking at photos, while some show them as quite taught, others show them slack and uneven, as I'd ended up with. In that sense I rather like the 'well used' look it gives.

The difficulty in fitting the wire, and getting it as taught as possible through the very, very fine resin support hoops meant a number of them broke away while I was fitting it. Hence the outbursts of bad language! Naturally, once you have gone through this and finished, you do find an alternative (that I had missed), which in retrospect I would have used. This was some very fine Microrod, by Slaters, which I found on the SB Models stand at Trucks and Tracks. I did use this for the wire stays on the mast, and I am happy with the end result. If I did another, I'd use that for the ship's rails as well.

ABOVE: Ladder up to the bow gun position is a neat photo etched item. BELOW: The first LCI(L)s disembarked their troops down ramps either side of the bow. These were rolled forward and dropped into the water or onto the beach depending how close in the vessel could get.



ABOVE: An LCI(L) disembarking soldiers of the Canadian Highland Light Infantry - and their bicycles! Note the white painted metal tube 'taboo' fitted behind the bow Oerlikon. A necessary precaution to stop a gunner deeply engrossed in shooting at low flying aircraft from shooting bits off his own vessel. (via Ed Storey)
BELOW: The kit provides a set of transfers to mark the LCI with pennant numbers.

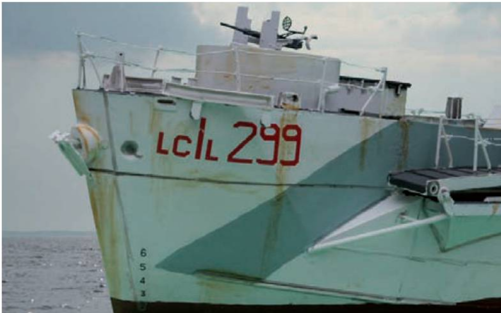
Painting and finishing

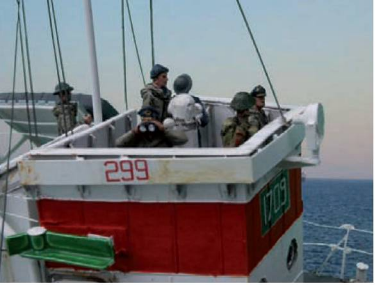
Once everything was assembled, and all the handrails fitted, the model was ready for painting. A guide is given on the coloured pages in the instructions supplied with the model. The camouflage pattern is pale blue on white, following a standard Admiralty pattern.

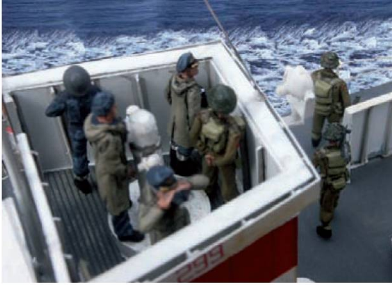
As the base colour of the hull is white, I used one of Halford's acrylic primer cans of spray paint for cars, and on this occasion it was white. A couple of coats of the spray primer gave a good even white finish, which I was quite pleased with. Next step was using Humbrol 79 Blue Grey, to do all the horizontal deck surfaces. The pale blue for the camouflage colour patterns was Humbrol 65 Aircraft Blue. The Oerlikon guns were painted Humbrol 53 Gunmetal and other detail fittings in appropriate colours, as given on the instructions. The navigation lights are green (starboard) and red (port) on either side, while the forward and rear-facing lights are silver, representing the basic 'white' lights that these were. Some counter shading was used around many areas, such as doors and the angles behind the bulwarks, using a dark brown ink wash. I do this roughly rather than try to make it too neat, as again it helps with the whole 'used' effect. Not everyone's choice, but it works for me.

Weathering, and what to do, how much, etc., was something that made me think. Looking at photos the LCI(L) were fairly 'well kept', in the tradition of naval ships, but once in action, the spit and polish went to one side. So my choice was to include some rust and wear, but not to overdo it too much. To do the rust, I used Microbrushes as the main applicator tool, plus some sponge applicators available from pharmacies that are available for make up applicators. I disappointed my teenage daughters that I was buying them for modelling rather than as accessories for them! For the rust, and with the way it has an oily 'grip' to it, I used the rust in one of Tamiya's powder sets (Set C). I was pleased with the result from this. Some wear on the deck was made, but not a lot, as the water at sea would keep it regularly 'swept clean'.

The Aleran transfers made for Milicast have good colour and stick down well. Cut them from the sheet, and trim away excess carrier film, for the ones you need for your chosen ship. They are standard water-slide transfers and I found they went on well. There aren't many of them, with the hull numbers being the largest, but they do add something special to the painted hull, with the bright red letters and numbers contrasting well against the white and blue hull.







The bridge has been populated with Milicast Royal Navy figures in appropriate garb – note that an Army liaison officer has been included in the assembly.

Finally, I had to consider how to put it on a base and my choice was for a plain base. I did consider trying to do the sea with the ramps down at the landing, but cowardice crept in. The problem is getting the sea to look right and I didn't trust myself to be able to get this done to a point that I would be happy with it. With a project that takes me time to finish, like this one, that would have added yet more time to it, plus given me an element I was not certain I'd be happy with. Hence my decision was to leave that for 'another day'.

Crew Figures

There are two aspects to the question of crew figures. Firstly, there are no figures supplied in the basic LCI(L) kit itself, but Milicast do have a number of Naval crew sets in their fine range of resin figure sets, including the Oerlikon gun crew. These are really a must, in order to bring the ship 'alive'. The second element again I discovered at Trucks 'n' Tracks, as Milicast have added a British Infantry set, of 13 standing figures, which can go on as the on board troops, plus another set with four more figures plus their bicycles. There are a couple of well known pictures of LCIs with the bicycles stacked on deck, as they prepared for the landings.

I am happy with the style I choose to use for painting figures, though some modellers will spend even longer on them. Once primed I paint the basic uniform, flesh and equipment colours. I used a dark brown ink (from the Coat d'Arms paint range), and applied it with a fine paint brush, around collars and cuffs, pockets, etc, as an outline. On the dark blue naval uniforms I used a black outline and then mixed a lighter shade of the basic dark blue uniform colour to add some highlights. My painting of faces these days, in this scale, is limited to colour for eyes and mouth, but in a simple way as to just get a shaded effect rather than try to paint detailed faces in this tiny size. Not my most impressive of admissions, but maybe I have to own up to age and eyesight beginning to get the better of my patience. I could go further, but it is just my personal choice these days not to get that embroiled or I'd never finish anything! What I want is the overall effect of the whole finished model, not to try and find out how perfect I can get the finest details.

Once they were all painted, then it was a case of positioning them around the vessel. There is a conversation between a deck hand near the stern, talking to one of the soldiers, maybe two ex-school mates meeting by chance? Another deck hand on the other side, tasked with sweeping the deck, pauses to watch the troops emerging to prepare for the landing. The senior officer of the landing troops is standing on the bridge with the captain, looking towards their destination. Others are coming on deck to prepare for landing. Another lookout is up in the bows, checking their path while one of his shipmates is climbing up to join him, maybe to prepare to hoist out the landing ramps when they reach the beach. Just one gun crew is prepared for action, though most likely there are only friendly aircraft flying overhead.

The bridge crew are on lookout and one is taking a break to have a "cup o' char" before they reach the run in. Just a couple of the troops are standing protected by the bulwarks, looking forward and pondering on what they are about or what might be lying in wait for them. For me it is all about trying to tell a story, or in this case a number of sub-stories, that a model like this is all about. How must it have felt to be on these craft, heading for who knew what? Seasickness would have added to the natural nervousness while the ship's crew did their best to do their own job as best they could.

Summary

Overall I can say I thoroughly enjoyed making the model and like the end result. It is something very different to what I'd usually make, so it was a real change. My perennial problem is always time with a project of this size, and it has taken me some months to get it all finished to my satisfaction. This is finding time while still preparing material for my monthly column, not forgetting family demands… oh, and of course my normal day job! However, an end result is here at last.

The next temptation is to think about doing one of the US versions of the LCI(L), with the taller conning tower, and one of the US Pacific or Mediterranean theatre paint finishes. I've added enough figures to give it some life, but as time goes on, and as I find additional figures to suit, I plan to keep adding troops to it to fill the decks even more.

The other challenge now of course might be the temptation to have a go at an LCT to go alongside it, and others of the smaller craft as well. Actually I have one of the smaller LCM1 done as well, with the exception of the markings. I gather there is a set of Aleran transfers being done for Milicast and they should be available by the time you read this. These will provide for the smaller craft that are already available in the Milicast range. They will be preferable to any attempt of mine to hand paint them, so that will sit on the side until then. When finished, I'll try to put a photo in Small scale Scene to keep you up to date. ■

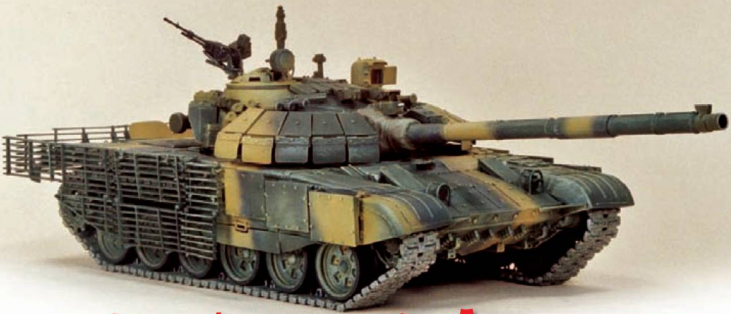
References

Firstly, I am indebted to Ed Storey in Canada, who kindly sent across some of the archive photos that you see here, after he had seen me mention the project within Small Scale Scene. My thanks to Ed for his help.

On the internet there is a good deal to be found, and for the US Navy there is a historical outline of every vessel, and where you will also find photos of some, plus others that have memories from those who served in these well-used vessels. There is certainly a lot of information readily available for those who want to know more.

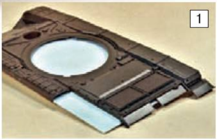
Two very useful books are an Arms & Armour Press book that reproduces the wartime handbook produced by the US Navy that listed all the various types and particularly useful is the book by J.D. Ladd, *Assault from the Sea 1939-1945*, published by David & Charles back in 1976 and I was very grateful for having this very useful reference sitting already on my bookshelf. Not in normal bookshops now, but I'd recommend keeping an eye open for it at second hand bookshops and stalls.

http://www.navsource.org/archives/10/15/15idx.htm
http://ibiblio.org/hyperwar/USN/USN-ships.html#photos
Assault from the Sea 1939-1945, J.D. Ladd. David & Charles. ISBN 0-71536-937-7.
Allied Landing Craft of WW2, published by Arms & Armour Press. ISBN 0-85368-687-4.



T-72B 'Rogatka'

The 21st Century Urals Tank



1. The upper hull with the rear left fender section cut away and the new sponson flooring in place. A strip styrene shim is needed to get a smooth joint with the left rear engine deck section.

In the second part of his study of the Russian tank Cookie Sewell builds a model of the T-72B 'Rogatka'

I saw this tank on one of the better Russian Internet sites – BTVT (http://www.btvt.narod.ru) – and decided to see if I could build a model of it. The drawback to that is that for the most part you have to work from pictures, but there were also a number of other good sites out there, which had some information of use on them. The only drawback is that to find good Russian subjects one has to search in Cyrillic to get them to come up on a browser. Happily the ever-popular Google search engine supports Cyrillic, so your only problems remain formatting the letters (the 'insert symbols or characters' in most word processors has a Cyrillic alphabet) and then being able to read what comes up. (The best stuff is *not* translated.)

My basic decision was this: do I build the 'North German Plain' version with full skirts, four skirt panels, and *'Nakidka'* coverings, or the 'Street Fighter' version with no *'Nakidka'* and the *'Reshyetka'* grille armour array? After thinking about it I decided on the 'Street Fighter' as it was both more interesting and also showed off all of the scratch built bits for the model; the 'North German Plain' one would have them all buried under layers of resin epoxy coverings and thus invisible to the viewer.

After carrying out quite a bit of research, I figured out at the time I started to build this it would take four basic components: a Tamiya T-72M1 kit for the base hull and turret fittings; a DML 'T-72M2' (actually a T-72B1, misnamed when it was released) for its 'Super Dolly Parton' turret front; a set of resin 'six-bolt' late model T-72 wheels; and two sets of SKIF T-64 single link tracks. I thought about the DML T-80 tracks as they have the right shape but they are about 2-3mm too wide and not up to current standards.

Conversion

The first step I took was to cut up the hull top and install a floor in it. This served as both the sponson floors Tamiya seems to revel in leaving out of nearly all of their kits as well as provide a base for later modifications. I also cut out the section where the exhaust plenum cover and the rear stowage bin and fender were on the left side of the hull, as they would be replaced with a new plenum and the GTA-18A APU. **(Photo 1)**

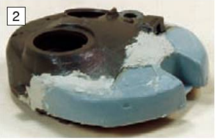
After that step, I then assembled the entire lower hull, but left off all of the stern plate details and only attached the inner wheels. The reason for that was that I would later attach a set of Chesapeake Model Designs outer wheels with the correct six-bolt pattern; the inside wheels would have eight-bolt pattern, but I needed a firm base for the tracks.

The drivers from the Tamiya T-72M1 are nicely done, but are only designed to mount the single-pin RMSh tracks and thus the double pin ones will not work. After scrounging around I found that the drivers for the ESCI BMPs are the right diameter and pitched for twin pin tracks and testing with some basic SKIF T-64 links showed them to be perfect. But since the BMP drivers are awful (wrong width and even the wrong number of spokes for a BMP!) I simply used a fine razor saw and cut their toothed rings off the castings, then cut the Tamiya toothed rings off their castings, combined the two and added the fixed bolt details. The result was a perfect fit on the model and for the new track links.

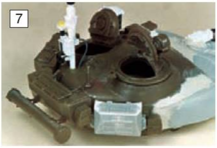
The tracks were assembled as they come out of the box with a few, um, minor exceptions. Each link received a facing for the outer surface, pad surfaces for the inner surface, three hex-head bolt heads on the connectors, and the tooth drilled out to represent the hollow tooth of the 'universal' tracks. At roughly 172 links for the pair of tracks, and with eight parts to each track (four strip styrene facings, three hex-head bolts from Plastruct hex rod), and the link itself that winds up with 1,376 parts to the tracks alone.

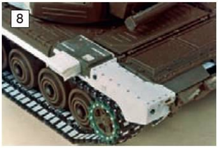
Ah, the miracle of the Northwest Short Line 'Chopper II!' (Believe it or not, it took less time to do these tracks than a normal set of Model Kasten or Fruilmodel tracks, and about one-third the time of a set of DML VVSS Sherman tracks.)

Next came the turret. Based on photo analysis, the trick is to create a base model T-72B tank without any of the extra cladding or changes made over the course of the tank's service; alas, Miniarm had a great T-72B turret, but as it had the cladding on it - I couldn't use it. Therefore, the first problem became one of combining the Tamiya T-72M1 hatch area and rear section with the 'Super Dolly' projections on the front of the Tamiya turret. To do this, I carefully cut a line across both turrets right in front of the TPD-K1 sight housing and at right angles to the turret centreline. There are 'natural' joint lines where parts were cast or welded together on the sides and those are where the lateral cuts have to go. This takes some patience and

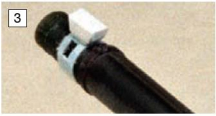


2. The Tamiya turret (Olive Drab) and the DML turret (grey) as assembled with the putty in place to smooth out the joint. As noted the panels on the roof of the turret help conceal the actual joint line.

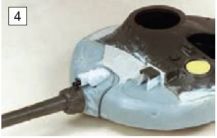




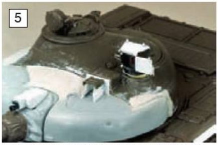
7. View of the right side of the turret with the converted DML bin in place as well as the two NSVT machine gun ammo boxes. Each box holds a single belt of 50 rounds. 8. The new exhaust snorkel has been made and the kit's plenum cover modified to fit the new snorkel, and the APU has been built and installed. I later added an insulated cover to the top of the plenum cover. The amount of work to modify the tracks can be seen, as well as the changes in the drivers. The kit's wheels were used and the drive tooth rings from an ESCI BMP-1 (!) were trimmed off, sanded smooth, and used as they fit the new tracks.



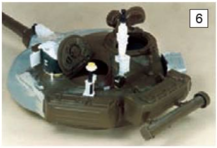
3. The new gun muzzle in place with the MRS sensor mounted (note the hole for the mirror in the rear slant of the device) and the shorter section of barrel shroud.



4. The turret with the gun in place as well as the sending unit for the MRS, the new elements of the TPD-K1 standard gunner's sight and the base for the 'Sosna-U' sight cupola. The MRS sender and the mantlet cover were smoothed in with putty later.



5. The turret now sports the scratch built 'Sosna-U' sight head cupola and the hatches have also been fitted. I had them set to open, but with no interior changed my mind and cemented them in place. Also the fender extensions where the skirt mounts used to go can be seen at the lower right of the photo.



6. Now the bins have been fitted as well as the OPVT tube at the rear of the centre bin, the antenna base, and the gyro seeker head to the left and the DVE-BS mast with rear light and marker light plus cabling. I soon found out that the entire DVE-BS sensor above the rectangular box was 70% too large! It was fixed thanks to accurate plans and dimensions – and some short work with a razor saw.

skill, but once the parts are cleanly separated they can be assembled fairly quickly. I used the Tamiya turret base and the rear as one assembly and the DML front section as the other. With some filing and winkling around, the parts fit together fairly well. I then used a section of .040in styrene as an internal brace to stiffen the structure and puttied in the edges. **(Photo 2)** Note that I also had to remove the night sight head from in front of the gunner's hatch as the *'Sosna-U'* cupola would be mounted there.

When dry, I used about six grades of sandpaper and flexible files to smooth out the joint between the two turret sections. The nice factor here is that due to the welded panels over the internal armour arrays it provides a nice straight seam to hide the joint.

The gun had to be amalgamated from both kits, however, with the DML gun base and covered mantlet parts being used for the base installation and the Tamiya gun barrel being used for most of the rest. Before I assembled the DML gun mantlet I cut a rectangular shape in it for the MRS sending/receiving unit. When I went to mount the parts, there were no problems until I went to install the muzzle reference sensor. I found that the barrel of the 2A46M-5 is turned to accept it and the length of the heat shroud is cut back the same distance. The shape of the barrel where the sensor mounts is shaped like a bobbin of thread. I found an old Renwal ONTOS gun barrels section, chucked it into a drill, and using a rattail file shaped the new part. Drilling out the barrel, I cut off the muzzle fitting plate, attached it to the new muzzle, cut back the shroud, and then mounted the new muzzle cap in place. **(Photo 3)**

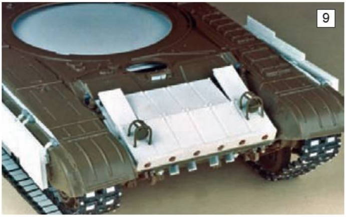
Next I built and mounted the MRS sender/receiver unit. This was scratch built from scrap plastic and a section of Contrail tubing. I also cut new side panels and a back panel for the TPD-K1 sight, but used the kit's weather cover for the sight. I also cut a base for the 'Sosna-U' head. **(Photo 4)**

The sight head was a problem, as I wanted to model it open with the bronze-coloured covers and sensor sections showing. I looked through my parts box and, lo and behold, I found the unused rear section of an old Peerless/Max 155mm howitzer was the perfect size and had the right shape; it was also hollow with no major assembly pin structures to remove. I cut a section of the right length, filed off the shoes for the cradle at the base and cut open the part between the shoes above it. I built the matrix from scrap plastic, painted it silver, installed two sections of exposed film header of the right bronze-orange shade, fitted the protective glass screen from clear styrene, and after painting the inside FS34088 green, installed the sight matrix. I could then add the cover, bolts, hooks, and open cover (it bolts shut for storage.) Finally I added the casting numbers – 'G 2' to the left side. Since it was a Russian 'G' – Greek letter 'Gamma' – I used some 2mm Wills' letters, the normal 2, but a reversed 'L' for the 'Gamma.' **(Photo 5)**

The next things to come were the turret details. I added the normal kit ones – commanders and gunner's hatches, rear and left side stowage bins, and OPVT tube and brackets – in short order. I had to scratch build the DVE-BS mast with attached lights, the gyro seeker head, and the right hand stowage bin. The first one was not hard other than the fact I did not have good photos for scaling; after it was done, of all things, I managed to find the sales brochure for the mast on line and after comparing measurements found out this one was 70% too big! Well, there are reasons modellers have tiny razor saws. A new head was built and installed with no ill effects. **(Photo 6)**

The biggest problem was where did the gyro seeker go? After a lot of measurements and changes I could only deduce that it had to be mounted on a bracket attached to the left side bin. I added one from Evergreen L-angle strip and fitted it along with its cabling. I created a new small bin by sectioning two DML ones from their kit and added a new top section. (I had no clear shots of the one on the T-72B *'Rogatka'* because this was covered by *'Nakidka'*, but saw a similar type on other vehicles.) I then added the NVST ammo cans. **(Photo 7)**

Setting the turret aside for a while, I then worked on the left rear side of the hull. I added the new exhaust snorkel from scratch, but modified the kit's plenum box cover to fit (and later added a layer of insulation when I got to see one without *'Nakidka'* covering it up.) There are three layers of 0.005in sheet styrene bend over formers with a 'Hold 'n' Fold' to get the right angles and look to them. The APU box was easier as it is basically a box with a curved belly plate to fit around the tracks, but I had to drill out the top cover plate (0.010in sheet) to insert Grandt Line bolt heads in it as per the prototype. The APU's blank outer surface is perked up by an intake door at the front (facing outside) and an exhaust port cover at the rear (facing rear.) It also has a protective bar and a taillight on it, as well as eventually being fitted with two fuel lines. **(Photo 8)**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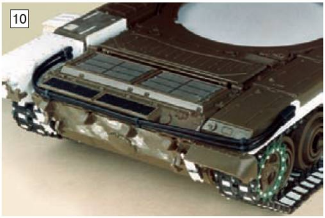
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9. The glacis was not a major problem as the plans from the 'Relikt' patent worked well when scaled up on a Xerox machine. The lower hull also got new KMT type mine plough mounts as well as the former glacis-mounted tow hooks and other details. Also note the viewer heads in the drive-mechanic's viewer cover. The skirts were reworked and mounts added for the 'Relikt' side panels, which were attached 'stadium style' with 2mm between each section. I have removed the fender fillers between the hull and fender tips for modification and remounting on the new front panel of the armour array. 10. The radiator air exhaust grille with its new crossbar is now in place, and the fuel lines for the APU have been added. The connection to the tanks on the right fender is something of conjecture, but it matches the one on the left side where they enter the APU housing. Also note the fender extensions on the right side where the 'Reshyetka' arrays will later be hung.

The glacis gave me fits for a while as the only photos of it on the *'Rogatka'* prototype are under *'Nakidka.'* Happily, reading Russian helps and I eventually found an article with the original patent drawings for *'Relikt'* showing how both the glacis and turret arrays are fitted to a tank. The ones shown were for a T-72, so simply scaling up and making some changes did the trick. There are 12 modules mounted on the glacis, of which six are in a line, four angled down, and two on the sides angled up. Unlike past practice, the UVZ moved the tow hooks to the lower glacis and mounted the headlights on top of the built-in armour array (hence the name) so they cover the entire glacis, something which was not previously done.

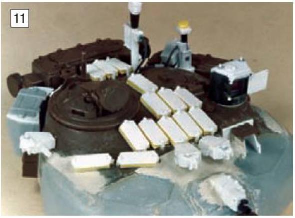
After modifying the side skirts (the rear two sections now have a new lower folding section as well, and the brackets on the front are changed around to provide for the *'Relikt'* side panel mounting brackets) they were fitted and after scratch building the six side panels they were installed. They use what auto manufacturers and theatres now call 'stadium seating' as they are each 2mm higher than the one in front of it. **(Photo 9)**

After getting all of the new fender edges in place with the side skirts I then turned to the rear of the hull. Since I couldn't see under the *'Reshyetka'* array at the rear of the hull, I only added what I could see, which was two links of the new 'universal' tracks on the sides and the tow hooks. (I later got a clear shot that what was under there were four links of the old RMSh tracks. Well, I guess it provides some extra protection.) I added a baffle to the centreline of the radiator air exhaust grille (Tamiya provided mesh screening, but left the baffle out) and installed it. Once it was in place, I added mounts for the fuel lines and the two fuel lines for the APU. I have no idea what the right hand attachment looks like, but using 'lump-ology' determined where they attached to the hull and used a similar fitting to the one on the left where they enter the APU. I used two segments of Contrail tubing cemented together to form the attachment brackets across the back of the hull. (Note that some photos show a tow cable stretched out over these lines making them very hard to see.) **(Photo 10)**

I then went back to the turret. The turret carries a variable number of *'Relikt'* bricks which fit into the same covers used by the previous *'Kontakt-5'* ERA elements, so all one has to do is copy the *'Kontakt-5'* bricks. These have a top, element case, and two mounting studs with bolts holding them in place, and are tapered so they can 'nest' like cells in a honeycomb. I was able to identify only 16 on this tank and as I may have cut them too large could only fit 15; it is once again thanks to the confounded *'Nakidka'* blanket that I cannot tell how many are actually fitted. But this matches most of the photos, as there is only so much room on the top of the turret and a number of bits have to be installed. **(Photo 11)**

The next thing – and in competition with the *'Relikt'* bricks – are the receiver heads for the *'Shtora'* system. There are four – two single 'fine azimuth' heads mounted behind the gun mantlet opening and two twin 'coarse azimuth' heads mounted asymmetrically on either side of the rear of the turret. Considering their size I cut and shaped them from single sections of heavy Evergreen strip, added the details and braces, and 'false mounted' them on the turret. I used a single heavy (0.040in) rod peg at the rear to ensure a solid fit and added the thin strip braces at the sides to match the prototypes. There are some things you can do with steel you can't do with styrene! **(Photo 12)**

The next problem was the *'Relikt'* main turret array of 10 wedge-shaped modules that mount on the rim of the front of the turret. Each one has an even-sided slant of about 7° - 8° resulting in a truncated triangle that covers about a 15° arc of the front of the turret. The resulting array protects nearly 180° of the frontal aspect of the tank's turret, less the gun itself. Nine are identical and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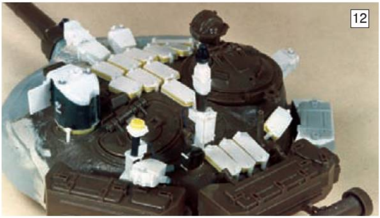
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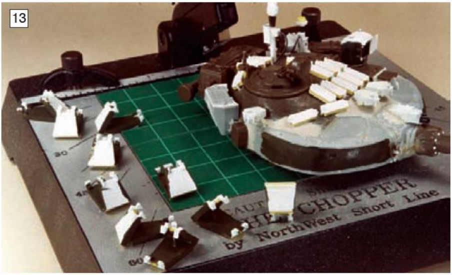
11. The turret now has the mantlet and MRS sender filleted in with putty and the turret details are being fitted. I could only firmly establish the location of 14 of the 21 'bricks' shown in the patent, but there are more items on the roof of the 'Rogatka' tank than on the 'nude' and generic T-72 in the patent. The TShU-1-1 and TShU-1-11 sensors have been added: the -11 ones go just behind the gun and angled to either side of the centreline, and the -1 sensors are mounted asymmetrically at the rear of the turret, the right one just in front of the commander's cupola and the left one just behind the gunner's hatch and the gyrocompass head. 12. Rear view of the turret showing how the various components align from the other side of the tank. The correct DVE-BS mast is now installed. Ah, the joy of trying to work from photos!

13



13. The secret to models like this with repetitive small parts or other items is the use of a fixed length cutting device, such as the Northwest Short Line 'Chopper II' shown here. This device made the construction of the ten 'Relikt' turret ERA modules a simple two-hour task, and assembly was included in that time! I painted the backs of the modules as well as the area under them prior to assembly, as I knew my airbrush could not reach them after assembly. Note that the PKTM machine gun barrel is now in place to the right of the gun.

the 10th is compacted as it is cut to provide room for the driver's head when the turret is turned off axis and the driver has his hatch open. Each one is attached with the bottom extending under the top one and a hinge on the lip for a folding flap made from the same material as the side skirts. After completing their construction, I painted the backs of the modules and the sides of the turret face under them, as I could not reach it for painting after final assembly. **(Photo 13)**

The last items to go on the turret were the 12 smoke grenade mortars for the Type 902A *'Tucha'* system (the letter signifies how many tubes it has: A – 12 mortars; B – 8 mortars; V – 6 mortars; and G – 4 mortars.) The kit parts were OK, but the rubber covers over the barrels are dished, so they were modified with a Dremel Minimite to match the original photos. I then had to make new mounts for all of the mortars, as they are not fitted in the same manner as on earlier tanks.

The concept of the smoke grenade mortars used to be to put a smokescreen up to 210 metres in front of the tank, and thus some tubes were angled at roughly a 45° angle to get the range; the new concepts are to get smoke immediately in front of the tank to disrupt laser rangefinders or designators and prevent the vehicle being hit by an incoming ATGM or PGM projectile. To that end they are now set at much flatter angles and barely clear the ERA modules on the turret. There are six on each side with two groups of three on the right and one group of six on the left. Each set had its own cable connection – wires are not needed as the Russians want to keep the 'opportunity to excel' (e.g. failure) to a minimum, and the less fragile wiring in the wind the better; the heavy cables are anchored and less vulnerable to damage from tree limbs, boots, shell fragments, etc. **(Photos 14 & 15)**

The Tamiya NVST machine gun is pretty good as it comes out of the box, so all I did was assemble it, drill out the muzzle flash hider, break the barrel off, swear, find the barrel, reattach it, and then set it aside to dry (and *not* handle it until needed!)

The construction of the *'Reshyetka'* arrays took some planning and experimentation. After trial and error and test arrays, I decided that, since I did not want to use brass and have to solder up all of those slats, that I would use styrene strip. Tests showed that 0.010in and 0.015in were too fragile for the purpose I had in mind, so I wound up settling on 0.020in. That is about twice the thickness of the actual slats, but the appearance is not too bad and they are relatively durable once in place.

The arrays are made by interlocking the slats and welding them in place onto the actual vehicle. To that end, I decided that manufacturing them would require some sort of jig for easy assembly and alignment of the slats. I then determined that notching the horizontal slats was the easier way to go as they could be done in one gulp, whereas the vertical bars would take numerous filings and slots.

The first jig and attempt were too big and too widely spaced – 0.100in x 0.020in strip and spaced out at 0.080in. When I figured out what size of strip I needed, I found out to my dismay that *all* local hobby shops were out of that size – 0.080in x 0.020in Evergreen. I eventually went into downtown Baltimore and bought out the entire supply at the MB Klein model railway store.

The second jig I wound up constructing used Evergreen 0.060in square strip sections cut on the 'Chopper II' and fixed to the base such that there was a gap in them where I could file a notch at either end of the strip. As per the original, I provided sufficient slots to do a set of eight slats at a time. But since all of the arrays were naturally of differing lengths, I had to put a moveable 'anvil' on the jig so I could adjust for the length and number of slots needed. The 'anvil' was cemented to a moveable bed under the jig and heavy square strip (0.100in) was used to make the alignment guides for filing. A cheesy Revlon carborundum coated nail file with dust on the edges was found to produce a kerf exactly 0.020in wide, so it was used to do all of the notches on the *'Reshyetka'* arrays. **(Photo 16)**

I found that it took about 24 hours for the arrays to dry solid so they could be assembled and mounted because I used Testor's Liquid Cement, a slow-setting adhesive, to assemble them. As a result, I had to make a second jig designed to hold the arrays in alignment while they dried that took some more trial and error, but I produced one which could hold six arrays at one time for drying. **(Photo 17)**

There are 19 sections forming the 11 *'Reshyetka'* arrays and I could generally finish one complete set (e.g. both sections of the arrays for both sides in the same position) in

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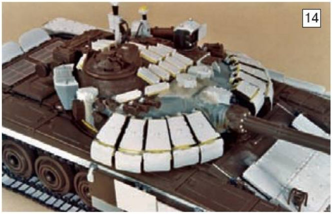

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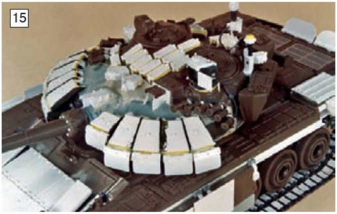
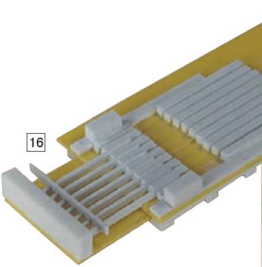
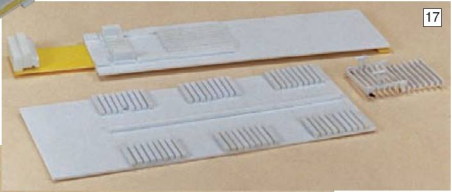


14. The completed turret from the right side showing the 'Relikt' arrays in place as well as the installation of the six right side 'Tucha' mortar tubes. These are grouped in threes and are angled to barely clear the 'Relikt' arrays. 15. Left side of the completed turret showing the installed 'Relikt' arrays and the six 'Tucha' mortar tubes on this side, basically mounted as one battery of six. (Controls are electronic, and the number of tubes fired can be controlled by either the commander or gunner.) Note the 'mudflaps' over the front of the 'Relikt' array and the short module over the place where the gunner's head will be in march (convoy) order. The 'mudflaps' flip backwards on hinges on the actual vehicle.

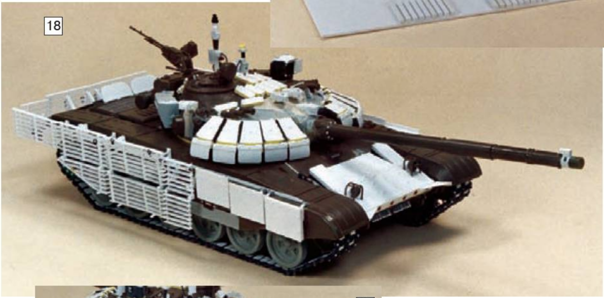
16. The device that made construction of the 'Reshyetka' arrays possible. The jig is set for up to eight slats across and can be adjusted for filing; the file (actually a cheap Revlon carborundum dust nail file that was 0.020in wide) was placed next to the raised section on the edges and a piece of 0.040in plastic was on the bottom as a stopping point (when the file hits and no daylight can be seen, the cut is precisely deep enough.) By moving the assembly forward or backward with a section of 0.040in styrene sheet, the slats could be moved to any position and held for filing from either the front or back side; here they are about to be moved backwards to have the rear slot cut into them. The slats were made from 0.080in x 0.020in Evergreen strip, and the vertical bars from 0.060in x 0.020in strip.



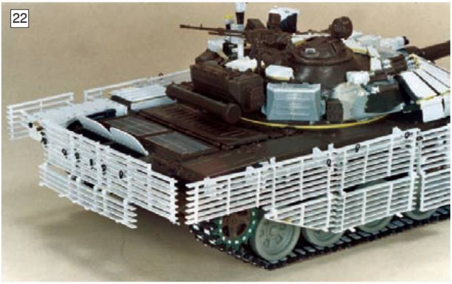


17. I needed a place to set the grille armour arrays for drying and eventually made this device. It can hold up to six arrays in position while the cement dried.

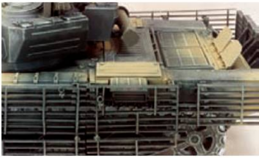
18 – 21. Views of the completed model prior to painting. If it is not grey, black or white, it was either added or modified to complete the model! Note that the skirts are extended downward on the second and third sections.



a modelling session. The arrays were hung on the sides of the tank using mounts created by a combination of cutting Evergreen 0.060in L-angle strip, trimming the ends to fit and tapering the rest of the section, mounting them to a section of 0.060in strip, and hanging the arrays from the fender extensions. Each array also had to have hex-head bolt heads and a set of 'push pins' that were made from Grandt Line lifting eyes for HO scale model railways. Once all of the arrays were in place, I test-fitted all of the components to the model to check the entire vehicle. At one point I had the arrays 0.060in too high and they interfered with the turret so they had to repositioned and re-evaluated. **(Photos 18, 19, 20 & 21)**



22. One of the last items added prior to finishing was the set of heat deflector flaps over the grilles for the radiator air exhaust. These were made from 0.020in sheet and fitted with Microrod hinges.



Close-up of the exhaust snorkel and the shrouds. The actual vehicle shows little soot and no oil build up here, a change from earlier Soviet-era tanks with the TDA smoke generator inside the snorkels.

The rear arrays are very fragile and I would probably do what the Russians did if I had it to do over – drill out the joint holes and articulate them so they would swing freely. Note that there are only five sections in the rear of the tank – the right array only has one section as it sits behind the track run. **(Photo 22)**

Finishing Off

The Russians currently tend to use a three-colour camouflage scheme of olive green, black and a sand colour in near equal parts, but only on the upper sections of the tank; the lower section is in their current 'protective khaki No. 2' shade, which is very similar to FS34088 dark green. This is a more olive shade than the old 4BO 'protective green' or FS34102 Forest Green. The black is pretty much straight flat black, but the sand varies greatly, and colours from near white to 'school bus yellow' have been seen on various tanks. The *'Rogatka'* prototype at Nizhniy Tagil seems to wear a slightly more yellow-tan shade than some of the others, so I hunted around for an appropriate match.

I decided on using Modelmaster FS34088 Green, FS37038 Flat Black, and Floquil Union Pacific Armour Yellow. This gave the look to the model I wanted and matched up reasonably well with the photos I had of the vehicle. As I had left the outer wheels off and also the top and bottom of the hull were still unattached, I began painting the wheels and tracks.

I painted the entire assembly on each side first with the FS34088 Green. Masking off the wheels and hull sides with Silly Putty and 3M Blue Tape, I then painted the tracks with Floquil Gunmetal, a rather bluish, dull silver colour. This gave a good base coat for the tracks, which then received a heavy dry brushing of Floquil Earth followed by a wash of black oil paint and mineral spirits. Once this was dry, they got another good dry brushing with first Floquil Grime and then Old Silver to bring out the tops of the cleats in the track. The wheels had their tyres painted flat black and then were installed on the hull.

The model was left in separate parts while the three main colours were painted onto them, starting with the lightest (armour yellow) then the green and finally the black. Once done, the detail parts were painted; nearly all of the new kit other than the *'Relikt'* armour modules and the *'Reshyetka'* arrays is painted a 'khaki' shade which matches with US FS34087 Olive Drab. This includes the *'Shtora'* sensors, the DVE-BS mast, the gyro seeker head, and the ammo cans for the NVST machine gun.

The entire tank was then given a wash of first a mixture of ochre, Cadmium Yellow and white oils mixed with mineral spirits; the tanks are regularly driven into puddles of mud during 'dog and pony shows' for prospective buyers or reporters and as the ground does not get truly muddy, it only leaves a patina of yellowish mud on the tank's surfaces. After that dried, selected areas received a wash of black oil paint.

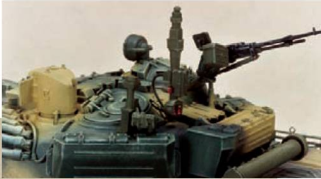
Once the washes had dried the tank was dry-brushed with Floquil Old Concrete, a yellowish shade that compliments the general finish and gives it a good 'worn' look. This was tricky with the *'Reshyetka'* arrays, as they did not take kindly to even gentle dry brushing and I had to repair one or another arrays nine times during painting!

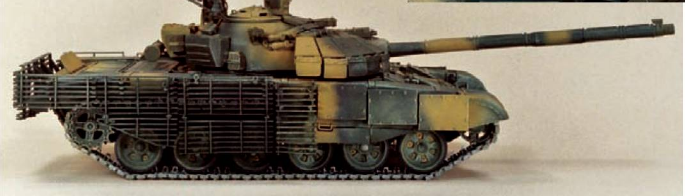
Once the essential painting was done, the model was assembled and shot with first Testor's Dullcote to level the paint and then Floquil Dust to kill all shine. The vehicle bears no markings, so no decals or transfers had to be applied.

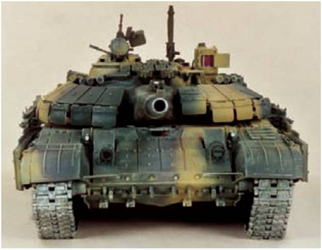
The last steps are relatively critical to getting a good realistic look to the model. The tail and marker lights, along with the driver's night viewer (just to the left of his main viewer) were given a base coat of flat white paint. Once dry, the tail and rear facing marker lights received a coat of Testor's Taillight Red and the driver's viewer had a square of the bronze-orange film header cemented in place with Micro Kristal-Kleer. Finally sections of black film header strips were cemented in place over all of the viewer ports and also a punch dot over the IR headlight on the right side of the hull.

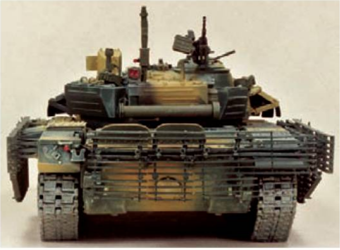
After primary photography was completed, I found the model was still too fragile to handle so I had to permanently mount it on a base.

RIGHT: Rear of the turret roof. Nothing like a big white 'YOU MISSED ME!' spot after it's too late to redo the photos! I did fix the rear turret identification light later. Also note that the machine gun and all of the other items really cramp the back of the turret, and it appears the machine gun must be locked in place with the barrel turned in towards the centreline if the radio antenna is to remain straight. The ammo box is right on top of it.

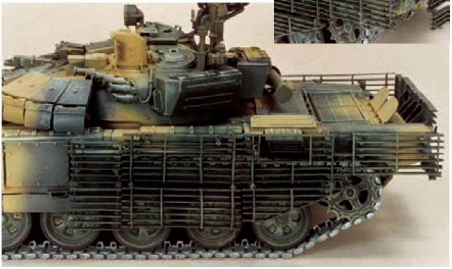




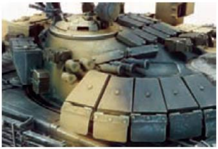




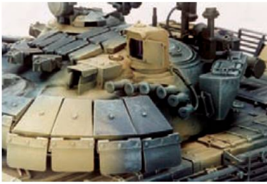
The finished model made for an Army briefing that shows off the lines of the tank with the 'Reshyetka' and 'Relikt' arrays in place. It's hard to tell that under all that it is still a T-72 series tank. RIGHT: The GTA-18A showing how it is protected from the side, but not the rear, as it requires room to open the exhaust port and provide safety clearance for the exhaust (it is a miniature turbine engine after all.) Note the 'stagger' in the 'Reshyetka' arrays.



The 'Reshyetka' array showing how it has to 'bob and weave' to leave room for the V-92S2 engine exhaust snorkel and the intake area of the GTA-18A auxiliary power unit. The finished shroud over the exhaust plenum cover is also visible here.



Close-up of the right side 'Tucha' mortar tubes; the difference here is that each group of three is connected to the same cable.



Close-up of the left side 'Tucha' mortar tubes; the ones on the left are all connected to one cable with very short wires that do not show up in most photos. The cables do show and are attached to the turret with welded brackets to try and prevent damage from frisky trees or errant tankers' boots.

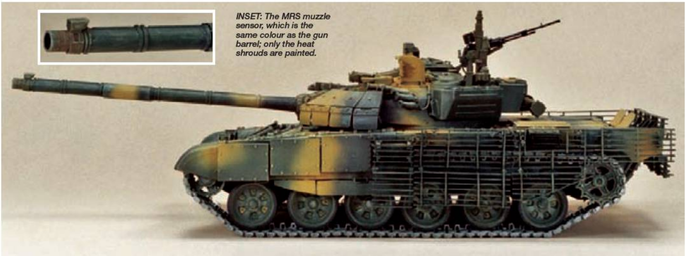
Conclusion

The T-72B *'Rogatka'* is a very striking vehicle in its overall appearance and if the Russians do push on to convert their remaining T-72B fleet to this design it will present a very formidable opponent in places like Chechnya. Building a model of it was easier than I originally thought, but it still took around 100 hours and about 3,000 parts of one sort or another added to or replaced on the basic kit.

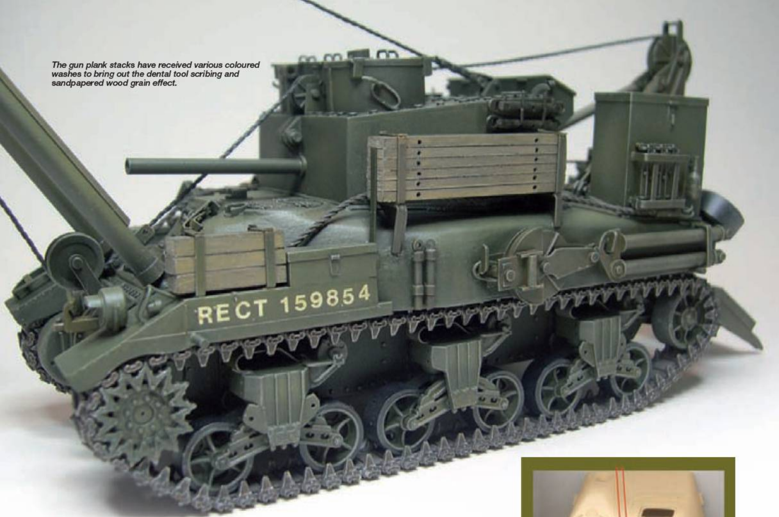
Of interest to modellers and Russian armour fans is the latest move the Russians have put forth; there are five patents which have come out related to putting a second autoloader (the 'bustle' autoloader from the now famous Object 640 'Black Eagle' tank designed by Omsk) on the backs of T-72, T-80 and T-90 tanks. Now *that* ought to make an interesting model!

Acknowledgements

Thanks to Steve Zaloga, Bill Miley, Dennis Holicky and Jim Nix for their material assistance on this project. Photos courtesy the National Ground Intelligence Centre, Charlottesville, Virginia. ■



INSET: The MRS muzzle sensor, which is the same colour as the gun barrel; only the heat shrouds are painted.



The gun plank stacks have received various coloured washes to bring out the dental tool scribing and sandpapered wood grain effect.

Taking the Strain

Part Two: Chris Johnson models the Ram ARV Mark II in 1:35 scale

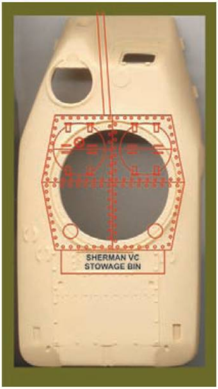
The Ram ARV Mark II was converted from a Ram II cruiser bearing War Department number CT159854. Her number indicates that she was one of a batch of 148 Ram Mark IIs produced during July 1943, bearing WD numbers CT159724 through CT159872. She can be identified as one of these late production (although not final production) versions by circular cut outs on the sides of the front fenders. This feature entered production beginning with CT159724. On the other hand, CT159854 did not have air scoops on the top rear corners of the hull, as that feature did not enter production until CT159872.

According to current information, CT159854 initially served as a cruiser with 'C' Squadron, 12th Canadian Armoured Regiment (Three Rivers Regiment) where she was unofficially named 'Canadian'. However, the Three Rivers Regiment, equipped with Shermans, landed in Sicily on 10th July 1943 as part of 1st Canadian Armoured Brigade. As the tank was built that same month in Canada, it seems that this information is highly suspect. At some undetermined point though, CT159854 was shipped to the United Kingdom and was struck off strength from the Canadian Army to the British Army in either January or October 1944. Indications are that she was delivered to 13 AFV Depot, Kegworth, where she was earmarked for conversion into a Mark II ARV.

While there is not a great deal of information readily available about the Ram ARV Mark II, my interest was originally piqued in 1995 when issue number 52 of *Wheels & Tracks* magazine touched on it. Since then, I've accumulated whatever material I could find. The most important references from a modeller's perspective were the accompanying historical photos kindly provided by Clive Law of Service Publications, together with the photographs of the Sherman ARV Mark II in Ampersand's issue number 4 of their 'Allied-Axis' series. These latter photos added to my understanding of the common features of the Mark II design, and the lone overhead photograph was indispensable for building this model.

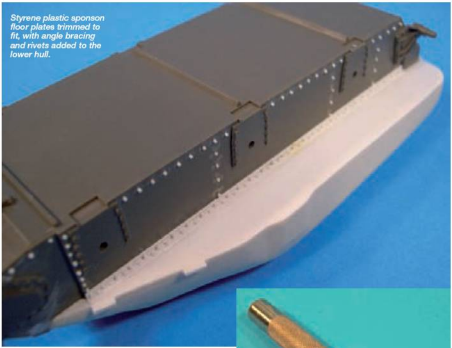
Enter Formations

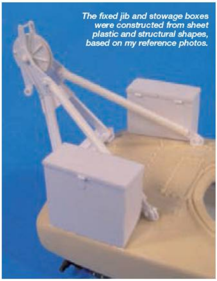
The project began to really gain steam with the release of the Formations' late production Ram OP conversion kit, based on Tamiya's M4. The Formations hull incorporates fender cut outs so it was a perfect starting point for this project. As with any self-respecting Sherman modeller, I just happened to have the Tamiya kit on hand. The most daunting obstacle to overcome though was my inexperience in scratch building. Up to this point in my modelling pursuits, I had built 'out of the box', with only a scattering of resin conversions and photo-etched additions thrown in the mix.



The scan of the Formations' Ram II hull with my turret plan view laid over top of it. The hull has the casting depressions at the rear of the engine deck that has been missed by manufacturers in the past.

Before beginning construction, I wanted to ensure that I could add a fixed superstructure


Styrene plastic sponson floor plates trimmed to fit, with angle bracing and rivets added to the lower hull.


The fixed jib and stowage boxes were constructed from sheet plastic and structural shapes, based on my reference photos.

A set of hollow punches is just the trick for making various sized small disks. A 12-piece set ranging in size from 1/8in to 3/4in cost just over $20.00CDN.

to the Formations' hull. Towards that end, I scanned the topside of the hull and imported it into CorelDRAW for use as a template. I sized the scan so that it was dimensionally the same as the actual 1:35 scale resin hull and then I laid out the plan view shape of the turret, based on a study of my reference photos. A computer assisted drawing program is a useful tool in this regard as it enabled me to make quick and painless adjustments to my plan, before ever having to cut plastic.

My first step in the project was to cement Tamiya's M4 differential and final drive housing and rear plate to the lower hull, and then super glue the resin upper hull to this assembly. I added Formations' exhaust pipes and round canister air filters at this time also. With the hull assembled, I chose to take the easy way out in closing up the open sponson floors. While Formations provides sponson floor plates in their conversion kit, I wasn't adding an interior, so I simply used .010in sheet plastic inserted between the hull sections, and trimmed it to fit. With the sponson floors filled, I replicated the bracing at the joint between the upper and lower hulls with Evergreen right angle stock. Then came the ponderous task of adding the missing rivet detail to the sides of the lower hull. I sliced them from small diameter plastic rod and using the tip of my hobby knife, transferred them to the lower hull, and glued them in place. While some modellers prefer to punch rivets and bolt heads for authenticity, I find that in areas largely hidden from view, slices of plastic rod are more than adequate for the job.

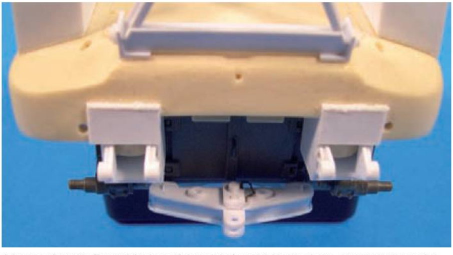
Jib and Bins

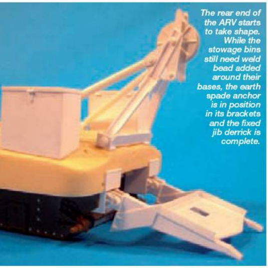
At this point, I decided to tackle the stowage bins and the fixed jib on the rear deck, the theory being to eliminate the hardest parts of the build first. At least, that was the theory. Not having any past experience in scratch building, I approached these assemblies with some trepidation. What I discovered along the way was that if you take the time to break down complicated features into basic shapes, the process is not as daunting as I initially thought it would be.

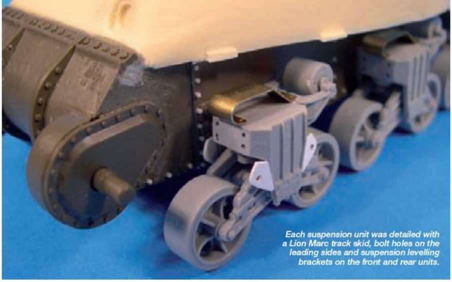
Before tackling the fixed jib, it was necessary to build the stowage boxes and glue them in place so I'd be able to determine where the tubular braces for the jib assembly would go. As it turned out, it was a very tight fit to get everything in place. The tubular braces just cleared the boxes by the slimmest of margins.

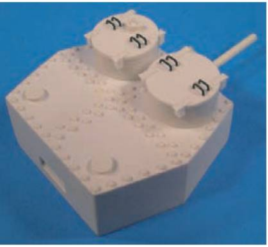
In regards to the stowage bins, the most difficult aspect of construction was in making them conform to the compound angles of the upper hull, as it slopes down to the outside edges and down towards the rear end. My solution was mark the hull where the front and rear ends of the bins would be and then determine the angles of the hull at these points using simple gauges made from strip plastic. I used the gauges to transfer the angles to the sides and end pieces of the bins and cut them to match. Once the bins were glued together, I sanded the bottom edges, checking them against the top of the hull repeatedly, to ensure that I had a good fit. I added 1.5 mm strips of plastic around the tops to replicate the edges of the lids and then added padlock hasps and hinges from bits of plastic.

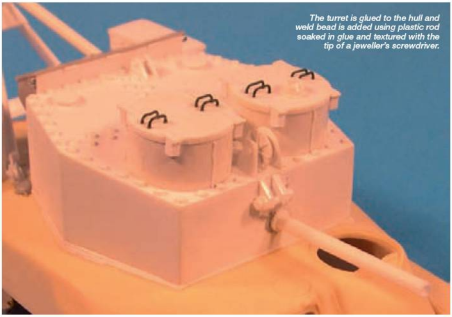
Construction of the fixed jib derrick was a matter of laying out the width and height of the assembly and then building it from Evergreen channel stock. Ultimately, it all came down to ensuring that everything was square before gluing it all together. I knew going into it that this project would require a considerable number of various sized small plastic discs for making sheaves and my good friend George Bradford suggested using machinist's hollow punches to knock them out. I rounded up a set on the Internet from a discount tool supply company for a reasonable price, and set about punching various diameter discs. I used a

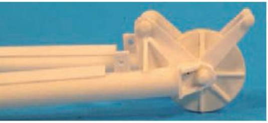

A-frame configuration. Two straight pieces of channel stock sandwiching the sheave, connected to two angled pieces of channel stock.

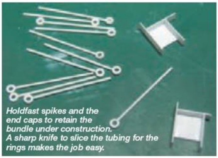

The rear end of the ARV starts to take shape. While the stowage bins still need weld bead added around their bases, the earth spade anchor is in position in its brackets and the fixed jib derrick is complete.

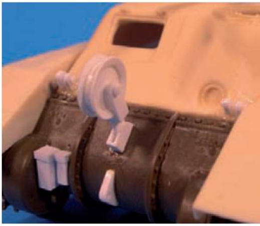

Each suspension unit was detailed with a Lion Marc track skid, bolt holes on the leading sides and suspension levelling brackets on the front and rear units.


The turret starts to take shape with the major components in place. The winch cable aperture is on the rear plate and just visible inside, are the fairlead rollers.


The turret is glued to the hull and weld bead is added using plastic rod soaked in glue and textured with the tip of a jeweller's screwdriver.


The business end of the jib crane. It looks complicated, but once broken down into basic shapes, construction went well. The crane legs are reinforced with angle stock on the upper sides.

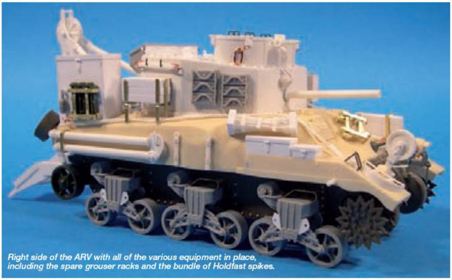

Holdfast spikes and the end caps to retain the bundle under construction. A sharp knife to slice the tubing for the rings makes the job easy.


Adding fixtures to the front of the hull for the jib crane. There were dedicated brackets on the Mark II for the crane compared to the Mark I, which used adaptors on the towing lugs. The swivel sheave is glued in place, ready to be rigged for a lift.

rubber mallet and found that the punches worked best with thin plastic, backed by a piece of hardwood. Strike the punch sharply to cut the plastic cleanly and laminate them to the thickness required.

Once the derrick and sheave assembly was glued to the engine deck, I added the tubular supports and mounting brackets as appear in the reference photos. I then moved on to the earth spade anchor and its mounting brackets. While I didn't anticipate this part of the project as being overly difficult, the brackets actually turned out to be the components that caused me the most grief. They consist of two vertical plates with a bottom plate, the assembly-extending out from the rear wall of the lower hull. This three-sided open box is reinforced by a plate welded to the rear of the upper hull, and there are pivot brackets welded to, and extending out from this mounting box. To complicate matters further, the whole assembly encloses the air cleaner and there is precious little room for the two assemblies under the upper hull overhang. With a considerable amount of trial and error, I managed to make two identical assemblies and fit them in place. I added a weld bead to the top edge of the reinforcing plate on the rear of the upper hull by soaking a piece of plastic rod with cement and pressing the weld bead texture into it with the tip of a jeweller's screw driver.

With the earth spade brackets in place, I started construction of the spade itself. A check of my reference photos indicated that while it might look complicated at first glance, it was actually a simple design, and when broken down into its component parts, not at all difficult to construct from plastic. I cut the spade arms to shape with a razor saw and the rest of the construction went smoothly, using various pieces of plastic.


Right side of the ARV with all of the various equipment in place, including the spare grouser racks and the bundle of Holdfast spikes.

I'm fortunate to have a drawing of the swivelling Towing Attachment in my reference collection and to replicate it, I used a thick piece of styrene, cutting and filing it into the basic shape. I sandwiched it between two thin pieces of sheet plastic and trimmed them so they followed its contours, leaving them just a bit larger than the inside piece. Then it was just a matter of adding the mounting brackets, photo-etched chain and other detail bits and pieces.

The vertical volute sprung suspension with straight return roller brackets came from DML's M4A3 'Battle of the Bulge' kit. I drilled out the return roller mounting bracket holes on the forward facing sides of the suspension units and added pre-formed brass return roller skids from Lion Marc. These are quite nice, but expensive, and after the tracks are added they are largely hidden from sight. I also added brackets for the suspension limiting pins to both sides of the front and rear suspension assemblies. The spoked road wheels also came from the DML 'Battle of the Bulge' kit.

Fixed Superstructure

At this juncture, I moved on to building the fixed superstructure. My primary reference was the overhead shot of the Sherman ARV Mk II from the 'Allied-Axis' book, which I had used when laying out the plan view of the turret. Using that plan as a guide, I cut all of the vertical sidepieces from .020in sheet plastic and glued them together, adding an internal brace across the middle to reinforce the sides and the roof. The roof itself was made from two oversized pieces of plastic butted up against each other at the lateral centre line of the structure. I trimmed them to size after the glue had set and as the roof was actually composed of four plates, I scored a line down the middle from front to rear, which gives the viewer the illusion of separate plates. I added bolt detail to the roof, along with two ventilators. These ventilators are composed of a stack of three plastic discs, the smaller base ones punched out with a leather punch and the wider tops with a paper punch. I cut out the winch cable aperture in the rear plate, adding two pieces of tubing on the inside of the hole to represent fairlead rollers.

Luckily, I had an old plastic swimming snorkel on hand that was just the right diameter for the drum-shaped cupolas on the roof of the superstructure. A test dab of styrene cement on the snorkel made it tacky, so I had the additional benefit of discovering that it was made from styrene plastic. As the front half of the roof slopes down towards the front of the superstructure, I would have to cut the bottoms of the cupolas on an angle so they'd sit vertically, or cut oval holes in the roof and extend them through it. Deciding that it would be easier to cut them to fit the roof, I estimated the angle, transferred it to a woodworking mitre saw, and made the cuts. The resulting angles definitely weren't perfect so it was a matter of repeated sanding and test fitting until they sat completely vertical when viewed from all sides. Once I had the angle just right, I cut them to length and capped the tops with sheet plastic. I trimmed and sanded the caps flush with the sides and wrapped a 1.5 mm band of plastic strip around them to represent the edges of the hatches. A centre line was scored transversely on each cap to give the impression of double hatch flaps. Hinges and floral wire grab handles were installed, together with a periscope guard made from plastic tube and scrap plastic for the periscope itself. To finish off, I added a weld bead down the front of each cupola using textured plastic rod.

The dummy gun is simply a piece of hollow tubing with a slightly larger slice of tubing representing a collar where the pipe attaches to the superstructure. The 'gun' is mounted slightly off centre and angled to the left side. Directly above it is the bracket, which is employed when erecting the jib boom, and on the front edge of the roof is the small diameter sheave and its mounting bracket. The jib support cable connects to a bracket located at the rear of the roof, slightly offset to the left of centre. The Sherman Vc stowage box, with a rear plate added from sheet styrene, came from DML's M4A1 kit. I added Evergreen right angle brackets and sliced 'bolt' heads where it attached to the rear plate of the superstructure.

To ensure a strong bond, I used epoxy glue to mount the superstructure to the hull and when that had cured, I super glued textured plastic rod around the lower edges to replicate built up weld beads which filled the slight gaps on either side where the hull sloped down to the outer edges. After super gluing the front fenders to the hull, the correct pattern sprockets from an old Tamiya M4A3 kit and idlers from Academy's M10 kit were installed.

Portable Jib Boom

The next step was to add the portable jib boom. Initially, I had planned to show the crane stowed on the hull, but I decided to take a stab at building it in the raised position, and rigged for a lift. First though, I needed to add the brackets for the boom legs to the front of the hull to ensure that I built the crane to fit them properly, thereby reducing the probability of bowing the legs when attaching them to the hull. The brackets were made with bits of plastic and glued in place with epoxy glue, as I wasn't sure what sort of strain they'd be subjected to. Once the sheave assembly was built, the boom legs were made from tube stock reinforced with right angle stock on the upper sides. The lower ends of the legs were capped with plastic and then I wrapped 1.5 mm plastic strips around the bottom of each leg to replicate the reinforcement evident on the actual boom legs. Tabs were then cemented in place at the correct angle for insertion into the mounting brackets on the hull.

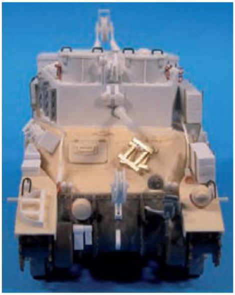
The swivelling sheave on the differential and final drive housing was made in similar fashion to the other sheaves. In this case though, there were collars on the outer edges of the sheave and to replicate them, I punched out two more disks, slightly larger than the sheave itself. Using the punch I made the sheave with, I carefully punched out the centres of the oversized disks, which gave me nicely dished collars to add to either side of the sheave.

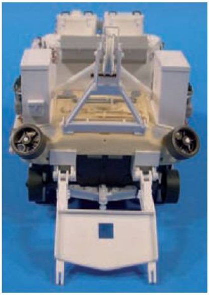
With the major components built, it was now time to start fleshing the model out with detail parts. I used 1/64in x 1/16in brass strips to fashion grouser racks on both of the stowage bins. The grousers came from the Academy M10 kit. (There appeared to be extra grouser racks hung loosely on the driver's station bulge in the cast hull so I added them too.)

Extra Detail Additions

I made two Hollebone tow bars based on my references; the long one stowed on the right side of the hull and the shorter version on the left side. The pins for levelling the suspension arms are pieces of plastic rod with strips of masking tape wound around them, secured with drops of super glue. A slice of hollow tubing on the top of each replicates the ring seen on the real pins. They were attached to the hull, two per side, with super glue. The gun planks were fashioned from pieces of thick plastic cut to size and glued together in a stack. I used a dental tool to engrave the joint between the pieces and scored the outer surfaces of each stack with coarse sandpaper to create a wood grain effect. The brackets that hold them in place were made from brass strip that I bent around the stacks to ensure a tight fit.

The methyl bromide fire extinguishers are from DML's M4A1 kit, as are the T62 steel chevron spare track blocks mounted in racks on the right side of the fixed superstructure. Academy's M10 kit provided the spare road wheels located on the rear corners of the





***ABOVE LEFT:** Front view showing the dummy gun angled to the left so it doesn't interfere with the winching cable.*
***ABOVE RIGHT:** The spade anchor is shown to good effect in this rear view, as is the towing attachment. Just visible inside each of the brackets are the Formations round canister air cleaners.*

hull and as they already had retaining bolts moulded on the hubs, they were perfect for the job. I found a mechanic's vice in Italeri's Field Tool Shop kit and made a curved bracket for it from a strip cut from a plastic disc, which was then cemented to the differential and final drive housing. The bow machine gun is from the Tamiya M4 kit.

Three of the small stowage boxes located on the front fenders of Ram cruisers weren't a feature of the Observation Post version and, therefore, aren't included in the Formations' conversion kit. They were easily made with laminated plastic with 1.5 mm strips wound around the upper edges to replicate the edges of the lids.

Four Holdfasts were cut from plastic tubing through which I drilled holes where the spikes would be driven through them into the ground. I used bent copper wire at the ends to represent shackles as I was desperately short of plastic moulded ones. The spikes for the Holdfasts are lengths of narrow plastic rod to which I glued thin slices of tubing. I made a good number of them and glued them together randomly in a bundle. End caps, made from scrap plastic, were cemented on both ends of the bundle. Finally, I fashioned straps on the bundle from narrow strips of masking tape and added fine wire buckles to them. The whole assembly was then super glued onto the hull.

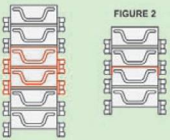
Formations provide good headlights in their OP kit and I only added brackets made from copper wire for some extra detail. The small lights on each fender are scrap plastic with brush guards made from floral wire. I followed my references in making the Snatch Block, Service Pattern, and hung it on the side of the hull with plastic brackets. The stowage bracket for the portable jib boom sheave, mounted on the right front fender, was made by wrapping a strip of plastic around a piece of doweling and thermo-forming it in boiling water. The ends were glued together to form a circle and then I cemented braces in place on the upper edge. After cutting the circle in half, I trimmed the three braces to size.

The hooks and large links on the cupolas that held the boom support cable when not in use were made with copper wire, and the tow ropes are lengths of nylon kite string with ends fashioned from hollow tubing and copper wire. The pioneer tools are a mixture from Formations and several DML kits. The tool tie-downs were made with narrow strips of masking tape, as is my usual practice.

I had intended to use RHPS individual link T54E1 tracks for this model as I like their detail and they are easy to work with. Unfortunately, they no longer seem to be available so I bought a Modelkasten set. I remember reading how one modeller described assembling them as 'painful' and I can agree with that sentiment. While the detail is first rate, they are time consuming and fiddling in nature to build. So much so, that I abandoned them in favour of the T54E1 rubber band style tracks from DML's M4A2 'Tarawa' kit. These tracks can be glued together with styrene cement and in my opinion, the sharp detail rivals the Modelkasten set and a further bonus is that they fit the Tamiya drive sprocket I used. The one problem I encountered was that they were much too loose. To remedy that, I removed two blocks per track and re-cemented them together with Tamiya Extra Thin cement. Even after repeatedly installing and removing them during the build, the bond remains strong.

FIGURE 1

FIGURE 2



Shortening DML's M4A2 "Tarawa" T54E1 Tracks

Remove the track blocks and end connectors outlined in red in Figure 1, with a sharp hobby knife.

Glue the tracks together with a "hot" glue such as Tamiya's Extra Thin glue, as in Figure 2. The butt end joint is reinforced by the end connector surface along both sides of the joint.

The final step in construction was to mount the portable jib boom on the hull with epoxy glue. When it was fully cured, I rigged the ARV with a length of nylon kite string. I super glued one end to one of the rollers on the inside of the rear wall of the superstructure and then fed it up and over the sheave on the fixed rear jib. It was at that point that I realized that I'd forgotten to make the fairlead roller assembly on the rear deck. I quickly threw one together from bits of tubing and plastic strips and cemented it in place. When I started to rig the cable for the second time, this time through the fairlead, the brace on the fixed jib interfered with the cable so I had to gently pry it off and relocate it. The rest of the rigging went well and with no further issues, I super glued the cable to each sheave to ensure that it was taut.

A Scenic Prop

With the ARV fully rigged, it was time to put a load on the winch cable. The Academy M10 kit has a very good likeness of the General Motors twin diesel engine so I assembled it and made two radiator fans for it to add some extra detail. I fashioned an engine sling from small chain and bits of plastic, and suspended the whole assembly from the winch cable with a shackle from the M10 kit. The engine looked good hanging from the jib boom, but at this point I thought it might look even better if it was dangling above an engine compartment.

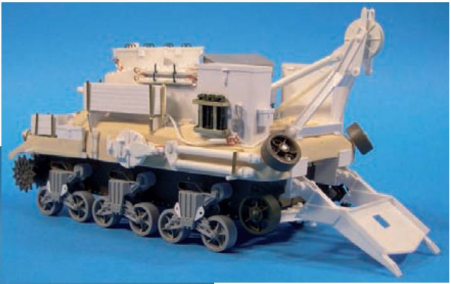
As I had been raiding the Academy M10 kit throughout this project, I decided to use the M10 itself as a prop. I really didn't want anything more than an open engine compartment, so as not to distract attention from the ARV and therefore, I decided to cut the M10 in half to give the impression that it was 'disappearing' into space.

It seemed obvious that removing an engine from the M10 required more working space than provided for by simply removing the engine grilles, so I split the individual plates from the one-piece engine deck assembly. In the end though, I didn't install any of them on the hull.

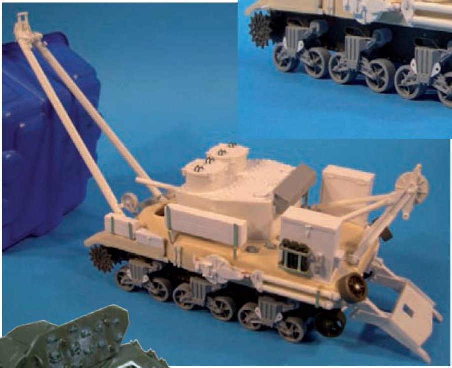
Before assembling the upper and lower hulls, I added plastic strip around the edge of the engine deck opening to replicate the lip where the deck plates would have been bolted down. Having done that, I cemented the upper and lower hulls together, and then built the turret and suspension. I glued the turret in place, rotated to the left so as to fully expose the engine compartment. This M10 kit was ideal for my purposes as not only does it include an engine and a basic engine compartment, but it also has a detailed crew compartment firewall too.

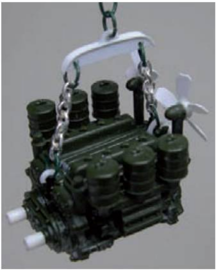
With the basic assembly completed, I dragged out my wood working mitre saw again and with slow, deliberate backstrokes so as not to cut too aggressively, I sawed the M10 in half. The cut-off edges were a bit ragged, especially in regards to the gun breech and road wheel, so I filled those holes and used a plate glass surface with a sheet of wet sandpaper laid on it to sand the cut-off edges smooth and flush. Then I added a thin piece of sheet plastic to blank off the lower hull and sanded that smooth also. The T48 rubber chevron tracks

RIGHT: The earth spade mounting brackets were perhaps the most difficult part of the whole model to make. The spare Tamiya road wheels would later be replaced with Academy ones that had retaining bolts moulded on.



BELOW: Test-fitting the jib crane to check that the winch cable would have a clear path over the various sheaves. Note that I've forgotten the fairlead on the rear deck. I would catch that omission when I started to rig the winch cable. The armoured filler caps came from the DML M4A1 kit.





The twin GMC diesel engine came from the Academy M10 kit and I've added an engine sling and radiator cooling fans.

After building the basic hull and turret of the M10 kit, I sawed it apart, keeping just the rear end to use as a prop for the ARV and engine. The Academy kit is well suited to being cut in half because of the interior detail included in the kit. It was with some trepidation that I sawed it apart with my woodworking mitre saw!

with extended end connectors came from the DML M4A1 kit to add some interest, and while they're a tight fit for the M10 hull, I do have reference photos to show that they were occasionally installed on British M10s.

The tools stowed on the engine deck received masking tape tie downs, and I added a first aid kit, a rack of grousers and fire extinguisher brackets made from plastic strip and aluminium from a soft drink can for the steel straps. I removed the moulded tie-downs from the turret side and substituted floral wire replacements. Any holes in the engine compartment firewall were simply blanked off with scrap plastic, as the engine suspended above it would hide most of the compartment anyways.

Painting and Finishing

At this point, I used a spray can of standard automotive grey primer paint to prime both models, having first removed the gun planks from the ARV, as they would be painted separately. The next hurdle was to airbrush the ARV with something approximating S.C.C.15 Olive Drab. I reasoned that as the Ram was likely converted in late 1945, it would probably have been painted in this colour. While Mike Starmer gives mixtures for Humbrol paints, I use Tamiya acrylics so I made some enquiries with Steve Guthrie and eventually settled on Tamiya Olive Green XF58 mixed with some Olive Drab XF62, as current thought (Subject to change as always!) is that S.C.C.15 is an Olive Drab that is more greenish than brown. I airbrushed the model with this mixture and then highlighted the exposed upper surfaces with a considerably lighter shade made with the addition of some Tamiya Dark Yellow XF60. I have no magic mixture ratio, relying instead on what looks right to my eye.

The tracks were sprayed with automotive primer and then they received a black acrylic wash. When that was dry I followed up by dry-brushing them with Gun Metal and finally, an application of a dark brown wash. The gun planks were painted with Testor's acrylic Wood, mixed with some Tamiya Buff XF57. Several applications of an acrylic brown wash were applied to bring out the detail. While these planks may well have been originally painted, I wanted to add some contrast to the model by having them appear as worn and unfinished, from a combination of weather and hard use.

The M10 was painted in a similar fashion, but instead of S.C.C.15, I used Tamiya's Olive Drab XF62 lightened with Dark Yellow XF60. The idea here was to portray an M10 in its original American paint, to add contrast between it and the ARV. As I didn't want to attract undue attention to the cut-off side of the M10, I airbrushed that Flat Black.

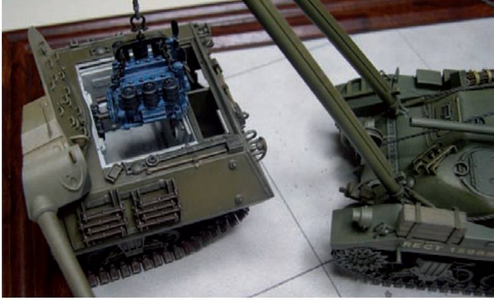
Preparatory to the weathering stage, I sprayed both models with clear matt lacquer from a spray can. I find that clear coats always darken my colour schemes so I compensate for this beforehand with much lighter shades of the base paint than what I want to end up with. As an aside, I often wonder if other modellers have similar experiences with clear coats.

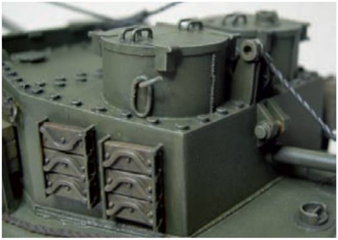
Recently, I have seen photographic references showing the GMC Twin Diesel painted in a light shade of green, but some years back I saw this engine pulled from the Oshawa Museum of Technology's M4A2(76) W HVSS for service and it was blue, so that's the colour I used. It also received dirty black washes and dry brushing to accentuate the detail.

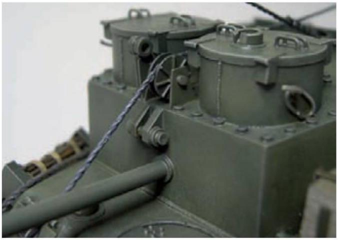
Decals were straightforward and only applied to the ARV. They consist of white Letraset 12pt letters and numbers transferred to a clear decal sheet, which was then over-sprayed with a matt clear coat to seal them. I applied them like any other decal and sealed them with another application of matt clear coat.

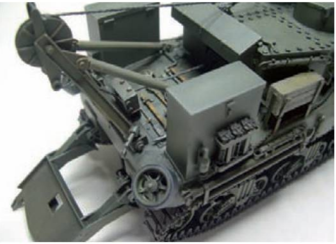
Pin washes were applied to raised detail and I dry-brushed with light brown shades of Humbrol enamels. I find that acrylics are always either too wet or too dry for dry brushing purposes, but Humbrol enamels are perfect for the job.

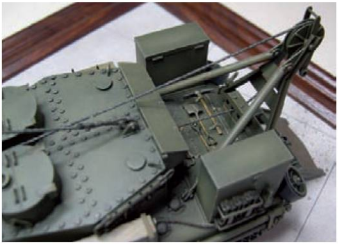
With both models completed, I turned my attention to a display base, which I wanted to have for photographic purposes. If I ever develop the least bit of talent in positioning and painting figures, I may yet turn this into a diorama! Until then though, I wanted to keep things simple so I elected to photograph the models on a nondescript concrete hardstanding. I bought a cheap wooden picture frame and a sheet of thick poster board, which I cut to fit the frame. Lines representing expansion seams were scored with a dental tool, making sure that they were not parallel to the edges of the frame. I then retrieved my trusty spray can of grey automotive primer and ever so lightly, sprayed an uneven dusting of paint, the idea being to just tint the white a bit to give it an appearance of weathered concrete. Using a fine tip black marker, I ran it along the expansion joints to emphasize them and then I sprayed the poster board with several coats of clear matt. To finish it off, I flicked a stiff brush loaded with grimy black wash here and there to represent faded grease stains.


The M10 'prop' is in place and the twin diesel hangs suspended above the engine compartment. All I need to do now is to practice positioning and painting figures!




ABOVE LEFT: The right side of the superstructure, illustrating the weld beads that secure it to the hull. ABOVE RIGHT: The winch cable winds its way along the roof of the superstructure and passes by the dummy gun barrel. The bracket on the front plate of the superstructure was used to secure the winch cable when raising the jib crane.




ABOVE LEFT: One of the two turnbuckles that secured the spade anchor to the rear fixed jib is evident in this view as are the tools stowed on the engine deck, and the fairlead. ABOVE RIGHT: An overhead view of the engine deck that shows the winch cable passing through the fairlead, up and over the fixed rear jib, and across the superstructure roof.

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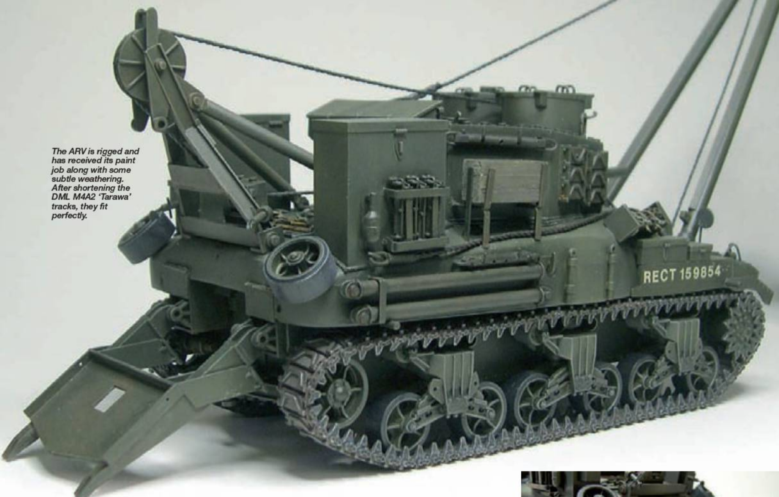
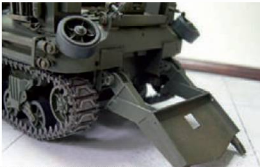


The ARV is rigged and has received its paint job along with some subtle weathering. After shortening the DML M4A2 'Tarawa' tracks, they fit perfectly.

RECT 159854

The Ram ARV Mark II on a simple concrete hardstand made from poster board and a picture frame.



The rubber band style DML M4A2 'Tarawa' tracks have excellent detail and are much easier to work with than individual link tracks. The oil and grease stains were made by lightly flicking a stiff brush loaded with a grimy black wash.

Acknowledgements

In conclusion, this first foray into scratch building has given me a good deal of self-satisfaction in what I've accomplished. There isn't much that I'd do differently and I certainly improved my modelling skills along the way. A tip of my hat to Peter Brown, George Bradford, Steve Guthrie, Clive Law and Bob Wiber for their advice and assistance throughout what must have seemed to them, a never-ending project.

Kits Used

Formations Ram II OP Conversion (F062).
Tamiya M4 (35190).
DML M4A1 75 mm Early Version (6048).
DML M4A3(76) W VVSS Sherman Battle of the Bulge (6255).
Academy U.S. Tank Destroyer M10 Duckbill Gun Motor Carriage (1397).
Italeri Field Tool Shop (419).
Tamiya German Tank Engine Maintenance Crew Set (MM-180).
Tamiya Jerrycans Set (MM126).

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Ram Tank Variants, *Wheels & Tracks*, Issue 52, 'After The Battle', 1995.
The Ram: Development and Variants, Volumes 1 and 2, Service Publications, 2002 and 2004.
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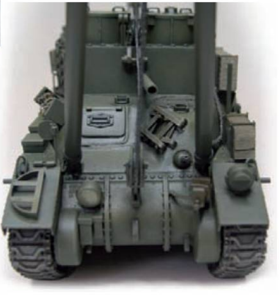
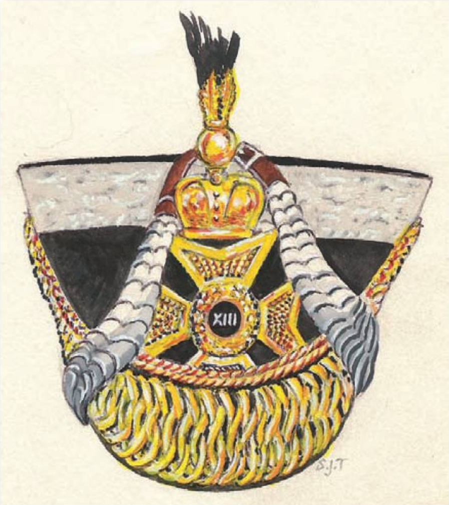
Diamond T980/981, Warehouse Publications, 2001.
Operational Handbook For The First Canadian Army 1944-1945, The Regimental Historian, 1996. ■



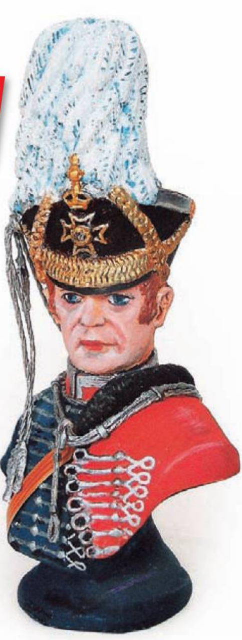
The mechanic's vice, additional towing lug, spare grouser racks and the rear view mirror are all visible in this front view.

Crowning Glory

Stan Taylor shows how to design latex and plaster of Paris moulds to produce a character bust model in plaster of a 13th Hussars officer c.1830



A better idea of what the 13th Hussars' shako actually looked like.



If there is a defining feature of the colourful uniforms of the past it must surely be the headdress; elaborate, flamboyant, sometimes bordering on the ridiculous, it was the item of clothing that immediately caught the eye.

Designed in some measure to create the illusion of increased height in the wearer, it could be an intimidating factor in the soldier's armoury; who would not feel apprehensive, say, at the sight of a battalion of Napoleon's Imperial Guard in their tall bearskins, cap-plates gleaming, bearing down on him? But often the extravagant headgear was down to the vanity of the commanding officer and there was a huge variety in headdress embellishment throughout the armies of the world.

The portrait bust of the hussar was sculpted essentially to show off the shako and its colourful fittings. The first source of information for the model was Colonel Robert Rankin's *Military Headdress - A Pictorial History 1660 – 1914*, which contains dozens of photographs of real examples of the more exotic types of the military man's crowning glory, including caps, kepis, shakos, busbies, bearskins, et al - in short, more military 'titfers' than you could shake a stick at! Among the plethora of examples I was particularly drawn to a photograph of the characteristic headdress of the 13th Hussars c.1830. It was in black and white and a little obscure in some details, but fortunately a coloured illustration of the same shako was found in an 'Eyewitness' visual dictionary edition on military uniforms.

The 13th Hussars shako was shorter than the general run of headdress in other regiments, but it made up for its lack of height with a tall plume that could be made of horsehair or feathers, according to rank. There was a wide variety of plumage available to the military milliner including ostrich, swan and cocktail feathers. I would hazard a guess that the long, narrow cocktail feathers were preferred by the hussars to suit the high, flowing lines of the regimental plumes. Officers of the 13th favoured white feathers, however, for some regiments the plumes were dyed black.

Designing a Bust

Clay was the chosen medium for the initial modelling, which is a versatile material, easily manipulated and it causes few problems in making good any mistakes. Plasticine may be more to the taste of some modellers, but I've found it a difficult medium for modelling fine details

For the beginner who might baulk at scratch-building a complete figure, the military 'portrait bust' could provide an easier entry-level into that aspect of the hobby. Modelling only the head and shoulders presents few of the complications, say, of a complete action figure or a mounted

1

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The three simple clay shapes formed in photo 1 come together to form the basis of the bust in photos 2 & 3.

2

cavalryman. Photo 1 shows a few simple pieces of pre-shaped clay that come together to show the core of the figure on which more clay can be added to build up the form.

The progress in the modelling of the clay bust can be seen in the series of photographs. Some parts of the figure in the early stages appear darker in the photos because the freshly applied clay carries more moisture than the partially dried out main body.

Although a model made in clay, when thoroughly dried out, could stand in its own right, it's usual to make a mould from it to produce a more durable end-product - in this case a cast in plaster of Paris.

Some of the fine detail was rather difficult to model at this scale, so some of the embellishments were made by a system known to the potter as sprigging. The shapes are engraved into a flat piece of plaster and clay pressings are taken from them and applied to the shako, using a little moisture on a fine brush to fix them in place. Before that, a thin paper template cut to the desired shape is offered up to the model to determine size and shape before being traced onto the plaster for engraving.

The plume began as a lump of clay fixed to the top of the shako (see photo **11**) to form the core around which the feathers could be formed by adding strips of clay. A sharp-pointed tool was used to engrave the lines to suggest the texture of the feathers. (Perhaps a good, sharp needle in a holder would provide a suitable instrument.)

A flexible mould will obviate many of the problems of under-cutting that a more rigid mould would present. A plaster mould would possibly need several sections to enable them to be removed cleanly from a casting, especially if the casting is itself made from a rigid material. For some models I've used Vinamould, which is a hot-melt plastic that can pose some danger if not handled with great care; but for the hussar cold-cure liquid latex was used to form the flexible mould. It has one disadvantage for an impatient man like myself, whereas Vinamould can do the job in a matter of hours, the liquid latex will take several days to cure if built up to the required thickness for this process!

A rubber mould is liable to distort under the weight of the liquid plaster poured into it. This is especially so if the rubber is very thin. Some rubber moulds are made thin enough to peel off a casting in one piece (the simple moulds found in children's toy casting kits come to mind) but for a more complicated figure it is advisable to make the mould in two parts, which will still keep the flexibility that allows of some under cutting. To remedy the aforementioned distortion, a plaster support is provided. This can be seen in the photograph showing the whole assembly ready for pouring the plaster. The two halves of the rubber mould with their plaster support can be seen in the photograph with the casting in the foreground.

When the model has reached its final stage it is ready for the moulding process. I have to confess that I became so engrossed in the job that I failed to stop to take photographs of some parts of the proceedings, but perhaps the diagrams will make things clear!

The first stage in making the two-part mould was to bury the model half way into a bed of clay; a bed of clay large enough to allow both inner and outer containing walls. Reference to the diagrams will make this clearer. In diagram A the half-buried figure can be seen inside its own containing walls ready for the coating of liquid latex. When a sufficient thickness of rubber has been built up and allowed to set firmly, the containing walls around the figure are removed before pouring the supporting plaster, which will be held by its own outer containing walls. Once the plaster has set the walls can be taken away and the whole assembly turned over and the clay bed removed to reveal the other side of the model, in the first half of the rubber mould, embedded in its plaster-of-Paris support.

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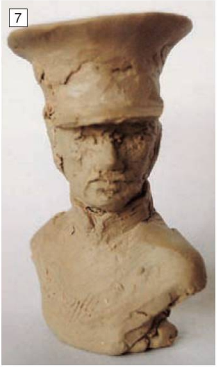

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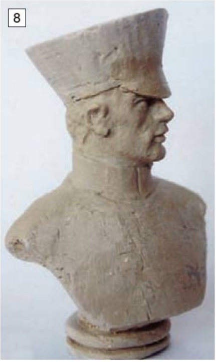

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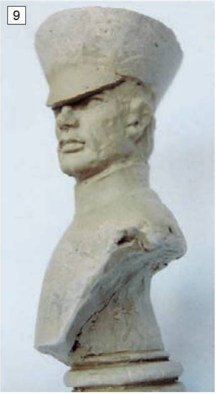
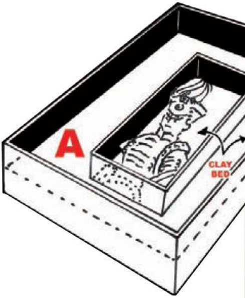


The stages of modelling the bust and the final result will depend upon your skill. Note how the clay is formed roughly to shape, the headdress and pillar base added and the sculpting refined ready for the addition of details as shown in photos 10 & 11. The 50p coin gives some indication of the size of the model.



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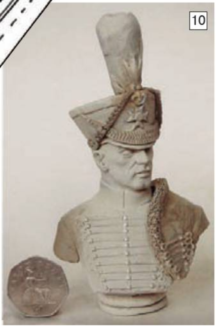

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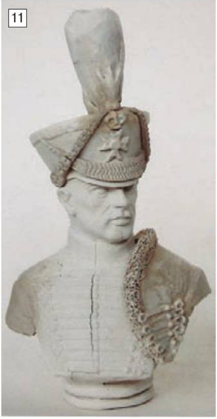
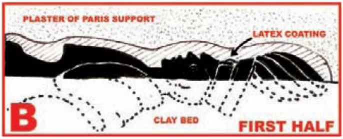
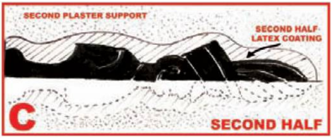


Before proceeding to the second and final part of the mould, some sort of separating agent must be applied to both rubber and plaster surfaces. I used a smear of oil on the rubber and a very thin wash of clay on the plaster to prevent further coats of rubber and plaster from sticking to the completed first half combination. Containing walls are still needed at this stage, but once these are in place, the procedures are a repetition of those for the first half of the mould. Diagrams **A**, **B** and **C** will make the whole thing crystal-clear - I hope!


PLASTER OF PARIS SUPPORT
LATEX COATING
B
CLAY BED
FIRST HALF

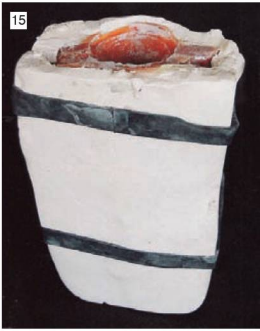

SECOND PLASTER SUPPORT
SECOND HALF LATEX COATING
C
SECOND HALF

12

A plaster cast of the bust made from the mould after cleaning up and made ready for painting.

13

15

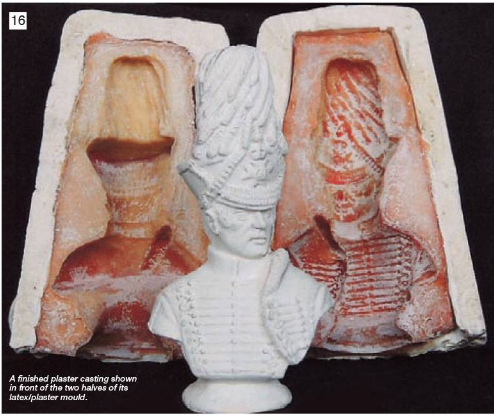


The mould assembled ready for pouring the plaster.

Once the moulding process has been completed it remains only to make a casting, in this case, in plaster-of-Paris. I've no experience of resin casting, but I should imagine that this type of mould would be suitable for a modeller looking for an end product in a more permanent material than plaster. The assembled mould can be seen in photo **15** showing the two halves clamped together with rubber bands ready for the plaster to be poured. Photograph **16** shows both halves of the mould as a background to the plaster casting. In my experience a cast never comes out of the mould as clean as a whistle; there is always some repair needed. Often air is trapped impeding the flow of plaster into the finer details. There will certainly be mould-lines, but these can be removed with a scalpel and smoothed over

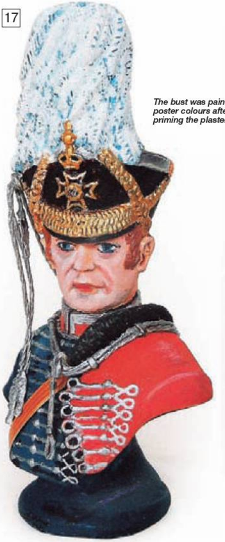
14

16



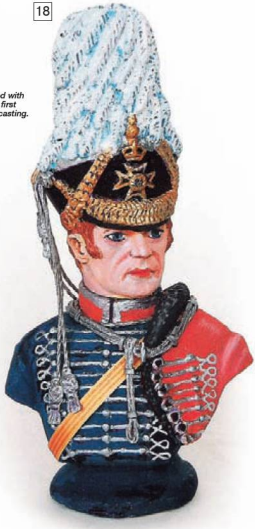
A finished plaster casting shown in front of the two halves of its latex/plaster mould.

17



The bust was painted with poster colours after first priming the plaster casting.

18



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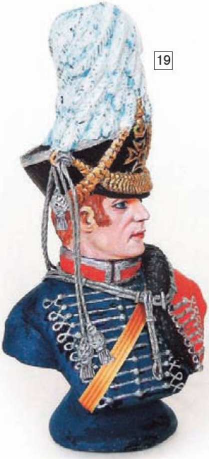


with very fine sandpaper. Any air bubbles trapped in the plaster will cause pits in the surface of the cast; they can be filled in with a little liquid plaster on a fine brush and cleaned up when the plaster has set. Agitating the liquid plaster before it sets in the mould can dislodge most bubbles.

When the cast is removed from the mould further refinements can be carried out, perhaps to sharpen detail or to make additions. Once this is completed the model is prepared for the final paint job.

Painting

Painting on the unprepared surface of plaster can be done, but, being an absorbent material, it tends to take the nature out of the paint and leave a rather dull finish. It is far better to prime the plaster first. An ordinary oil-based primer is suitable for this; it will give the model a protective coat and subsequent colours (in this case, acrylics) will retain that slight sheen that makes for a more lively appearance.

The basic colour of the shako is black, so no problem there; black straight from the tube did the job. The silver and gold poster paints used for the embellishments came in 170 ml plastic bottles and were the products of Calder Colours (Ashby) Ltd. under the name 'Ocaldo'. They gave a quite realistic metallic finish to the cords and flounces of the shako.

The tunic was painted in Royal Blue mixed with a little black to darken it to a more navy-blue-like appearance. The lacing on the tunic and pelisse was picked out in silver as was the fastenings and cords on the pelisse. The cap-lines and pelisse fastenings were made from strands of twine twisted together and stuck with the aid of a little PVA and painted in silver poster paint when dry. The pelisse cords were a little thicker than the cap-lines, so an extra strand of thread was added to make up the difference.

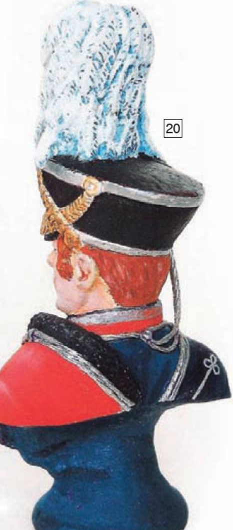
It will be; noted that the plume on the model has a slightly bluish cast. This is due to the blue wash of dilute acrylic paint, which was meant to flow into the engraved lines of the feathers to give them a little emphasis. With a dry-brush technique white paint was then scumbled across the feathers, leaving the blue to pick out the texture. This was based on the old adage of, 'out of the blue comes the whitest wash' - good for the wash, not so good for feathers!

I hope the article has inspired some would-be scratch builder to 'have a go' happy modelling!

Availability

Types of modelling clay, latex moulding rubbers, plaster of Paris and poster paints are available from most big craft stores. ■

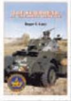
20



On Parade

Book and videos reviewed

● **Books and videos for review should be sent to:**
The Editor 'On Parade'
Military Modelling
PO Box 6017
Leighton Buzzard
LU7 2FA

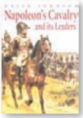


The Staghound in Canadian Service, Roger V. Lucy. Service Publications, PO Box 33071, Ottawa, Ontario K2C 3Y9 Canada.
www.servicepub.com
ISBN 978-1-894581-37-0. CDN$9.95
The American T17E1 armoured car was developed as a medium armoured car but rejected by the US forces. However it was built for British and Commonwealth service where it was known as the Staghound. One enthusiastic user was Canada, and this book tells the car's story in Canadian hands. It begins with a brief background on the vehicle and British ideas on the use of armoured cars before moving on to its adoption by the Canadians. Details of trials of different cars are given, then a run-down of the changes made during production and modifications for different roles such as command vehicles with extra radios. Other variants are covered, including the AA version, Staghound II with heavier armament and III with different turret, the experimental Canadian rocket-firing versions and the Bantu mine detector.

Most of the book covers the actual use of these cars in action in Italy and NW Europe, which contrasts the differences in these two theatres of war. Included are the different types of origination of the units using them and accounts of several actions. One showed a known drawback in the lack of a reverse steering position, which included an meeting with a Tiger tank at one point with unexpected results, and another covers an encounter with a German armoured car. After the Second World War several Staghounds were taken back to Canada and served for some years before finally fading away in the 1960s.

The account is illustrated with original black and white photos on almost every page and a set of 1:35 scale four-view plans in the centre pages. Photos will be very useful for anyone wanting to model a Canadian Staghound, they show variations in stowage including fittings for bridging trestles and the vehicle modified as a 'General Officer's Charger' as well as an unusual scene from the 1950s which would make for a different diorama.

With kits available in 1:72 and 1:35 scales this will be a welcome book for modellers and those interested in WW2 and Canadian armour. Like all in the series it is well produced and comes recommended. Thanks go to the author and publisher for producing it, and to the latter for sending a copy for review.
Peter Brown



Napoleon's Cavalry and its Leaders, David Johnson. Spellmount Ltd., Cirencester Road, Chalford, Stroud, Gloucestershire GL6 8PE. Tel: +44 (0)1285 760000. ISBN 978-1-86227-378-8. Price £14.99
Every now and then one hears of a book that you wish you had bought when it became available. One such book is David Johnson's seminal work on Napoleon's mounted forces, *Napoleon's Cavalry and its Leaders*. Mr Johnson is, without doubt, the world's leading authority on this subject (he also wrote *The French Cavalry, 1792-1815*, another hard-to-get work, but well worth the effort). Anyway, fear not, because you can now get it in a soft cover version printed by Spellmount.

This is no dull, fact-ridden tome, on the contrary it is full of information and anecdotes by someone who knows everything there is to know about the subject. Indeed, the author spent around 30 years researching the subject, spending months visiting France and tracking down obscure references as well as reading thousands of contemporary manuscripts. David Chandler, the renowned Napoleonic historian and prolific author, says of the book, 'As a survey of the history of the French mounted arm and its colourful leadership, Mr Johnson's (book) has no serious rival. Dotted with eye-witness accounts, it creates an atmosphere which culminates dramatically in the Battle of Waterloo.' This book is a positive must for any self-respecting Napoleonic enthusiast's library. It can be obtained from the publisher or from bookshops.
Charles Davis

The Bobcat APC in Canadian Service, Doug Knight. Service Publications, PO Box 33071, Ottawa, Ontario K2C 3Y9, Canada.
www.servicepub.com
ISBN 978-1-894581-47-9. CDN$9.95

The Bobcat may not be the most well-known AFV and the title of this book is a little misleading. Bobcat was designed during the 1950s and early 1960s to provide the Canadian army with an armoured personnel carrier. During WW2 Canada had pioneered the use of full-tracked APCs with first the unarmed Priest self-propelled gun and later Ram tanks without turrets, both known as Kangaroo. These were improvisations using what was available at short notice and had their drawbacks. A new vehicle was proposed starting with a clean sheet. The initial idea was a modern version of the wartime Universal Carrier then still in service, but the requirement evolved to add protection from above. It was then decided that the basic troop carrier would serve as the basis for a family of vehicles with weapons carrier, command and ambulance versions being the base vehicle with additional features though a load carrier and self-propelled 105mm howitzer would be different bodies using the basic chassis, engine and mechanical components.

While the idea was good and at one time it was even hoped to sell vehicles to the UK and USA, the project was dogged by a number of problems. Changing requirements meant that the design had to be changed while the company chosen to develop the vehicle also went through several reorganizations and changes of location, which further slowed development. Despite that several prototypes were built which brought various problems to light. To make the vehicle air portable it had to be small which resulted in it being cramped. The main contractor was more used to designing aircraft, the lack of experience with ground vehicles may have been one reason why the trials APC was too noisy for comfortable use. Some of the ideas and materials were then new which would have caused technical problems had the vehicle gone into service.

In the end Bobcat ran out of time. Faced with the need to have an APC in service the quickest and in the end cheapest option was to buy an existing design already in service, the M113 was chosen and Bobcat development ended without any vehicles being put into service. In spite of its lack of use the Bobcat story makes interesting reading, not least because it shows what can go wrong with a project. The story of its development is well told and illustrated with 22 black and white photos backed up by a four-view 1:35th scale plan. These will allow anyone interested to produce a model of the vehicle, given its history a kit is unlikely, but it would make an interesting scratch building project.
Peter Brown

Panzerwaffe Volume One, Series Editor John Prigent. Ian Allan Publishing Ltd., Riverdene Business Park, Hersham, Surrey KT12 4RG. www.ianallanpublishing.com
ISBN 978-0-7110-3239-2
Price £16.99

Written by a team of five authors, Rainer Strasheim, John Prigent (also Series Editor), Carlos Caballero Jurado, Lucas Molina Franco and William Russ, this is the first volume in series that will cover the history of German tanks and the *Panzerwaffe* from the First World War to the end of the Second. This first volume is adequately described by its subtitle – 'The Evolution of the Panzerwaffe to the fall of Poland 1939 and takes the reader specifically through that period.

The strong point of this book is not only its informative text, but also its illustrative content that presents a very good selection of photographs and some coloured profiles by Gareth Hector – unfortunately most of which are all dark 'panzer grey' befitting the period. A lot of the photographs, perhaps the majority, were until now unknown to most of us, coming from private collections, in which there has been much recent movement in the sale of such material. This is evidence of the work of the many miniature cameras readily available to *Wehrmacht* troops setting out to conquer the rest of Europe, unlike for example in Britain, where cameras for the common soldiery (and civilians) were strictly forbidden. Some of the photos presented of tanks, armoured cars and other vehicles are very rare images, indeed, which make the book's cover price value for money before even considering the text!

The story begins in the First World War and shows the homegrown products – the big A7V, plus the many captured British tanks put back into service against their former owners in as *Beute* – booty or loot! It continues into the immediate post-war period with much unrest in Germany and onto the beginnings of the new *Reichswehr* and the development of new armoured vehicles and specialist training for using tanks on the battlefield and also how to defeat them.

The Spanish Civil War began in 1936 and was a good testing ground for the *Panzerwaffe* and other German arms, and this is covered adequately, although for some reason the occupation of Austria and invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1938 precedes that chapter. The remaining chapter looks at the German invasion of Poland and the part played by the *Panzerwaffe* ending with Poland's defeat and a lot of lessons learned by the Germans which they would later put into good use against the French and British armies in 1940, which will, no doubt form part of the second volume of *Panzerwaffe*. Highly recommended.
Ken Jones

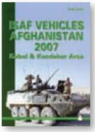
Armoured and Heavy Vehicles of the RUC 1922 – 2001, David Dunne. Ian Allan Publishing Ltd., Riverdene Business Park, Hersham, Surrey KT12 4RG. www.ianallanpublishing.com
ISBN 978-0-7110-3160-9 Price £19.99

The Royal Ulster Constabulary was formed in 1922 and throughout its period of existence and up to its assimilation into the Police Service of Northern Ireland in 2001, it used a varied inventory of armoured and other vehicles for policing the province's special needs. For the civil power to employ protected vehicles for policing was occasioned by the very nature of the situation in Ulster, and later in the last century as became all too vivid on the Nation's TV screens, the British army became involved with internal security and also used armoured vehicles in support of the RUC.

Such a variety of vehicles are featured in the book written by David Dunne a former RUC officer, ranging from Rolls Royce Armoured Cars, Lancia Personnel Carriers and Crossley Tenders of the early years through the manufacturers' names of the first RUC Personnel Carriers – Morris, Fordson, Bedford, Austin … lots of ex-British military types. I was surprised to see they also used M5 and M9 halftracks loaned from British army stocks during 1956-62. (The Vehicle Listings identifies 30 of these). There were also Daimler Dingo and Ferret armoured cars along with Humber 'Pigs' and some other obscure types. The RUC even borrowed huge heavy water cannon vehicles from the Belgian police! It seems for our European neighbours to possess such riot control equipment they are not as sensitive to lawbreakers and are perhaps much better prepared for appropriate policing methods on their streets than the British.

However, the Land Rover is the vehicle we largely associate with the RUC in various guises, and it is shown in its many variants from adding simple windscreen grilles in the 1950s up to specialist and modified vehicles seen during the Constabulary's final years before assimilation. This book is a treasure trove for the military (and civil police) vehicle enthusiasts and modellers - a most valuable addition is the Vehicle Listings Appendices, which lists the service records and numbers of all vehicles used by the RUC. I don't know of another book of its kind – and it comes highly recommended.
Ken Jones

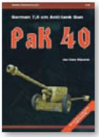
ISAF Vehicles Afghanistan 2007, Kabul & Kandahar Area, Dick Taylor. Mushroom Model Publications, 36 Ver Road, Redbourn, Herts AL3 7PE. www.mmpbooks.biz
ISBN 978-83-89450-76-0 Price £15.99



Dick Taylor, who will be known to readers of this magazine as a contributor, is also a serving officer in the British army and was seconded to Afghanistan last year. During his time there Dick photographed and recorded details of the types of vehicles used by the constituent countries of the ISAF (International Security and Assistance Force).

The book is basically divided into two sections – a photo-inventory with extended captions of the different vehicles used by the countries making up the ISAF showing some interesting additions and modifications made for operations in Afghanistan with the latter part of the book describing camouflage colours and showing their markings in detail. Excellent and up to date reference material for anyone interested in the modern military scene that involves the military forces of over 20 different nations.
Ken Jones

Armor PhotoGallery 18, German 7.5cm Anti-tank Gun PaK 40, Jan Coen Wijnstok. Model Centrum, Nowowiejska 4m. 10, 00-649 Warsaw, Poland.
www.modelbooks.republika.pl
ISBN 978-83-60672-04-4 Price €18.50



The German 7.5cm *PaK 40* (*Panzerabwehrkanone*) was one of the most successful antitank guns of the Second World War and could deal with most Allied tanks – it was low and easy to conceal and manoeuvre on the battlefield. Number 18 in the Armor PhotoGallery series of illustrated books published in Poland the book offers excellent reference material for anyone making a model of the PaK 40 for which there have been a few examples in the popular scales and Dragon Models Ltd have just released a 1:35 scale 'Premium' version of their model with crew figures.

Around 182 colour photos of preserved guns and 31 black and white photos of wartime guns are included in the book, backed with 15 pages of drawings reproduced to 1:24, 1:35 and 1:48 scales along with line drawings of ammunition types with marking and colouring details. To round off, 1:35 scale side views and partial cut-aways of *Marder II* and *Marder III, SdKfz 234/4* (*Schwerer Panzerspähwagen 7.5cm PaK 40*) that mounted the weapon are included. The text is English throughout and this is superb reference material for modellers.

Copies may be ordered direct from the publishers, plus p&p, at www.modelbooks.republika.pl
Ken Jones

Armor PhotoGallery 17, Italian Self-Propelled Guns Semovente M41 & M42, Daniel Guglielmi. Model Centrum, Nowowiejska 4m. 10, 00-649 Warsaw, Poland. www.modelbooks.republika.pl
ISBN 978-83-60672-03-7 Price €16.00

Semoventi
M 41 & M 42

The well-known Italian armour enthusiast and author Daniel Guglielmi is definitely in his element writing about the self-propelled guns or *Semovente* produced by Italy during the Second World War. In this 17th title in the Armor PhotoGallery series the M41 and M42 types are covered and the illustrations include a very detailed photo study of examples of the *M41 da 75/18* in the Italian Army Museum of Military Motorization in Rome and Museum of Oto Melara S.p.A in La Spezia. Both of these vehicles are in a very good condition of preservation both inside and out. The *M42 da 75/18* is located at the Aviation Museum in Rimini and is a vehicle originally manufactured under German control in 1944 and given the German designation of *Stumgeschütz M42 mit 75/18 850(i).*

The drawings section comprises six pages and has five views of both types to 1:48 and 1:35 scales. Two drawings of armour plate angles and an interior cut away of the fighting compartment annotated in English are from wartime Allied technical reports. The text is in English throughout and the Photo History section has black and white wartime photos of mainly the M40, some M41s and including the *M42 da 75/34* with longer gun and carro commando M42 command vehicle for *Semovente* equipped units. A good illustrated reference work on the Italian *Semovente* and highly recommended.

Copies may be ordered direct from the publishers, plus p&p, at **www.modelbooks.republika.pl**
Ken Jones

Small Scale Scene

● **E-mail:** robin@rbuckland.freeserve.co.uk ● **Website:** www. rbuckland.freeserve.co.uk

SHQ's German SdKfz 10 Demag half-track in 1:76 scale.

A monthly column for military vehicle modellers compiled by ROBIN BUCKLAND

As I write this, Christmas is upon us, and Pat Ware gave me a copy of his recent book on the *Red Ball Express*. In it is a photo showing two lines of 'shelters' somewhere on the convoy route in France. Not tents, but the tilts from US GMC trucks taken off the vehicles, and used as tents in a field. A great idea then for what to do with spare truck tilts from your models! Why not set them up like a line of tents in a field, alongside some trucks that have stopped for a break. Here is some photographic evidence in the *Red Ball Express* that just that was done, as the tilts were not being used on the open-backed trucks, and this way they didn't waste space by carrying around the tilt frame and canvas. An interesting diorama potential I thought, as soon as I saw it.

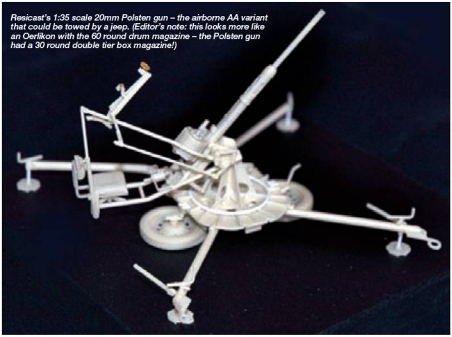
British Austin K3 three-ton GS truck in 1:76 scale from MMS.

The regular flow of new releases from Dragon, in both 1:35 and 1:72 scale just keeps on coming. It seems ever more difficult just to keep pace with it. What we have seen announced recently have been the 105mm armed *Stuh* (*Sturmhaubitze*) variant of the *StuG III* and since then a Bradley M6 Linebacker (it mounts a quad *Stinger* Launcher on the side of the turret) is due early in the New Year. Most recently we have seen another couple of Hummer variants arrive on the shelves of our model shops, featuring Psy Ops (Psychological Warfare) equipment mounted on the roof. As in previous releases, the upper body shell in moulded in clear plastic, as are the doors, so glazing is all integral. As the other weaponry is still on the sprues, you get some useful 'spares' as well.

Second new kit on the block is a Porsche Turreted King Tiger complete with *zimmerit* coating. Assembly of the Tiger is straightforward, and the *zimmerit* finish really does work well. Also neat is the inclusion of etched brass engine deck mesh screens and six varied camouflage and marking options catered for. Turret hatches can be modelled open, so it cries out to add some crew figures, which you can find from your favourite source, such as Preiser, AB Figures, SHQ, etc. Dragon is imported to the UK by the Hobby Company.

Resicast

Resicast had a whole bunch of new releases on their stand at Euro Militaire last September. Among these were a couple of things I thought I'd mention in particular. The first is another Jeep conversion for the Tamiya Jeep, to get a British Airborne Jeep, along with ammo trailer and the 20mm Polsten gun. The gun is one of the finest pieces of resin casting I can recall, with some very fine (thin) parts that are all perfectly cast. It looks to be a delicate and detailed assembly job, so not one for the beginner, but certainly OK if you have some experience with resin kits. Add to this a recent accessory set of Sherman stowage, that looks equally superb, I am pleased to see how Resicast keep a focus on British equipment of WW2, Airborne in particular, and always do it well and I've another piece to mention next time. Resicast are at 517 Vieux Chemin de Binche, 7000 Mons, Belgium. See also their Website at www.resicast.com



Resicast's 1:35 scale 20mm Polsten gun – the airborne AA variant that could be towed by a jeep. (Editor's note: this looks more like an Oerlikon with the 60 round drum magazine – the Polsten gun had a 30 round double tier box magazine!)

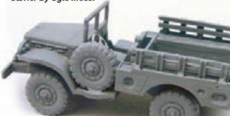
SHQ

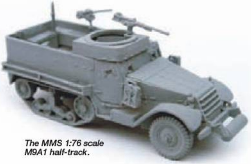
Another recent release from SHQ, in their 1:76 scale metal models, is a very neat little *SdKfz 10*. Primarily aimed at wargamers, this is now an extensive series of vehicles as well as figures. The little Demag is simple enough to assemble, and the castings are nicely done, so it goes together easily. Even a full rifle rack is included to go behind the front seats. As SHQ already do a wide range of guns, you can take your choice as to what you might choose to hook up behind it. All in all a very neat yet simple model. Give it a coat of primer before painting, but other than that, away you go. Contact them direct at SHQ, The Potting Shed, Flaxdrayton Farm, South Petherton, Somerset TA13 5LR. Tel: 01460 241306, newhopedesign@hotmail.com and their Website, www.shqminiatures.com

MMS

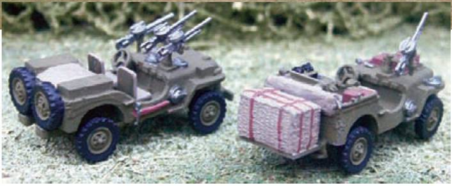
Now, more new models from MMS, with a US M9A1 half-track and an Austin K3 3-tonner. The Austin was long considered an easy conversion from the old Airfix Emergency Set, but in reality the front grille is really quite different. I am pleased to say that this new one gets the larger grille just right. The quality of these 1:76 scale cast white metal models is always excellent, and this is no exception. Assembly instructions, which include historical notes and an exploded assembly diagram, are provided in the usual format. You also have the option of using the full tilt that is provided, or not. There as some minor flash to clean off the wheels in my example and you do need to remove the

A 1:76 scale US Dodge Weapons Carrier by Sgts Mess.





The MMS 1:76 scale M9A1 half-track.



TOP: The real thing is always a good reference for modellers like this 'Airborne jeep' towing a 75mm Pak Howitzer and trailer – and something that can be made up with available models like the recent Sgts Mess jeeps. ABOVE: Sgts Mess jeeps fitted out with Vickers GO machine guns. There is one basic jeep in the range then the others are European or North African SAS armed jeeps, and another Recce jeep.

ABOVE: A good reference for the MMS M9 half-track was this restored example photographed at last year's War and Peace Show at Beltring.

metal that is cast into the windows of the cab. Best to do this by using a twist drill to make 3 or 4 holes, and then use a power tool and/or a craft knife to tidy it up, being careful in the corners and against the door frame. The lower half of the cab and the chassis are cast in one piece, so all is nice and square. The rear body is the common wooden GS body.

The US M9A1 half-track has a front mounted roller and the rear corners of the body rounded off, which help identify the type. You need a twist drill just to open up the mounting holes for details like the headlights, but assembly instructions are provided. Even the interior of the body is made up of parts to fit together and inside the body, super glue is the best for fitting parts into place. The end result is a very nice addition to the US half-track series. MMS are at PO Box 626, Folkestone, Kent CT20 9AF.

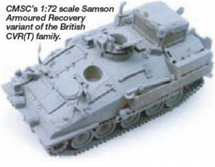
Sgts Mess

News this month from Sgts Mess who have a new range of 1:76 scale cast white metal figures and WW2 vehicles, which emerged following the move of SHQ to the West Country, where Gary and Ellen, who were part of the original SHQ team, didn't move with it, and who now have their own series of models that is gradually growing. Some initial figure sets are civilians, and geared to being 'refugees'. They feature men, women and children, some carrying or even sitting on their suitcases. Refugees were a sad feature in many photos of the war in Europe, forced out of their homes by fighting or invasion, and only left with what they could carry. There are eight little sets available so far.

Sgts Mess have also begun a WW2 vehicle range, with among the opening items a Dodge Weapons Carrier, which can be assembled either with or without tilt, and four variations on the Jeep. There is one basic Jeep, then the others are European or North African SAS armed jeeps, and another Recce jeep. Assembly instructions are included, though these are relatively simple kits to assemble. The undersides are not detailed, but the stout axles do mean they won't 'sag' under the weight of the model, which can happen with some metal models. I found the castings all to be clean, and they needed only a minimum of preparation prior to assembly. As most regular readers will know, I prefer solder for assembling white metal models, as in my experience it is stronger than super glue for the major components. I do use super glue for the smaller detail fittings. Sgts Mess are found at The Granary, Burley Lane, Ashe, Basingstoke, Hants RG25 3AG. Tel: 01256 770025 and they have a Website at www.sgtsmess.co.uk

CMSC

Some recent news now from CMSC (Continental Model Supply Company) from whom there have been some recent releases, but I won't cover them all at once. First one to bring to your attention is another in their 1:72 scale series of models for the British CVR(T) family, in this case it is the Samson, the Armoured Recovery variant. With the main hull moulded in resin, along with the commanders' cupola and some side stowage bins, all the road wheels, track and other detail fittings are cast metal parts. You will need a small twist drill just to open up some of the locating holes for the roadwheels, and to deepen them a little. The cast metal wheels need a little clean up from casting feeds, but this is easily done with no more than a craft knife. There are six lengths of metal cast track provided, and it actually takes about 2½ lengths for each side of track. Cleanly cast, just trim the guide teeth where you want to fit it round the sprocket and bend to shape. I find it best to start at the top of the drive sprocket, and wrap it down and around the lower run of road wheels. Then put a second full length in for the top run of track, from the sprocket to the rear idler. Finally bend the third section around the idler to join up underneath the rear road wheel, and trim off the excess track length. The end result is a nice sturdy assembly, super-glued into place. Two pages of assembly instructions are



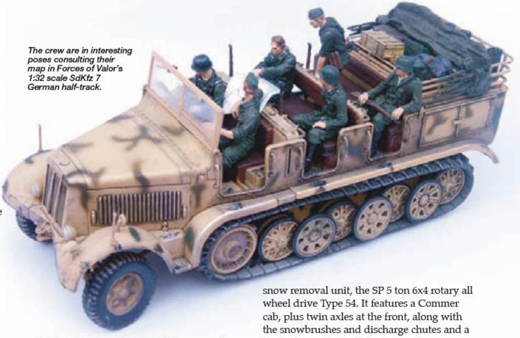
CMSC's 1:72 scale Samson Armoured Recovery variant of the British CVR(T) family.

provided, including an excellent exploded assembly diagram. Even a length of wire is provided for the winch cable, as the kit is quite complete. Hatches for the commander and driver can be fitted open or closed, and don't forget that there is already a set of modern British crew figures available in the CMSC range. Being a resin and metal multi-media kit, I always like to undercoat with a spay primer before painting the camouflage, be it plain green, green and black, a Gulf sand, or maybe a green and white winter finish. The CVR(T) family has been in service for some years now and used in many theatres of operation, so take your pick. CMSC kits are available direct from them at CMSC, 36 Gray Gardens, Romford, Essex, RM13 7NH, or if you want to order via the internet, then only through PDI Model Supplies, 26 Treborough, North Furzton, Milton Keynes, Bucks MK4 1LR. Tel/fax: 00 44 (0) 1908 505988 PSmith6328@aol.com

Tamiya

I took a long look at Tamiya's last year release of the little Renault UE carrier, but now I have one of their older kits on hand, that has been updated and re-released - the German *SdKfz 222* armoured car, as an *Afrika Korps* machine. The original kit was always good, but what I like most about this is how Tamiya have changed it to help 'tell a story' and released it as essentially a simple diorama in the one box. The armoured car is the original Tamiya 1:35 scale kit, so those who are already familiar with it will find it the same as usual, but the 'slight' differences provided are quite significant, however. First is the etched brass grenade screen to go on top of the turret, with the mesh and frame all in one, and it only needs to be removed from the fret, folded and fitted into place. This looks a whole lot better than the soft material mesh provided in the old version of the kit. Also, a turned aluminium gun barrel is provided and these were once the territory of the aftermarket producers, but now Tamiya (and other manufacturers) include them in some of their kits. There are three other plastic sprues, the first being the inclusion of the DKW N350 solo motorcycle, which was previously released by itself, and then there's an extra sprue with 16 jerrycans and three oil drums plus the hand pump, so maybe a fuel or water point could be represented. Finally, the all-new sprue added has three brand new figures, all in *Afrika Korps* uniform. One is the rider of the motorcycle, standing but astride the stationary bike, then a new commander and radio operator to fill that open turret top of the *SdKfz 222*, with the commander turning to look down and in conversation with the motorcyclist. I quite like this approach of breathing new life into the re-release of an older kit, and to me demonstrates the thinking that Tamiya are putting into improving their existing range of models, maximising their existing moulds. I just wonder what they might do next. Thanks to the UK importer, The Hobby Company, for my example.

Forces of Valor


The crew are in interesting poses consulting their map in Forces of Valor's 1:32 scale SdKfz 7 German half-track.

Staying on the theme of story telling, let me include one of the 1:32 scale ready-made models from Forces of Valor. A recent release from them is the *SdKfz 7*, ideal of course to go with the 8.8cm gun that they did a year earlier. The big half-track itself is very well reproduced, and with the option of full or collapsed tilt. In addition the box contains a section of broken wall, a beach obstacle and other accessories. Best bit for me though are the crew figures also included. The driver is half turned in his seat, while another crew member in the seats behind him points out something on a map (also supplied) folded over the seat back, while yet another crew figure stands in the rear row of seats, looking over the other's shoulders so he can see the map as well. The other crewmember figures are just letting them get on with the discussion. It is a long way from those original crew sets we had with a driver and maybe an officer, then another six identical bolt upright crewmembers filling the remaining seats. The whole thing comes made and painted to a good standard if you consider that these are mass-produced. Some may like the challenge of repainting the figures for themselves, but the half-track itself is pretty good. For those whose model assembly and/or painting skills are not up to it, then this allows anyone to add a neat model to their collection. If it is anything like when I was young, it was seeing things like this that encouraged me to think, 'I could do that' and set me on the path of conversions and scratch building, so there is no way I can fault these ready made models. Please note; I am careful to refer to them as models, not toys! The level of detail that goes into these now puts them into the collectors' market, not children's toys. My thanks to the manufacturer, Unimax Toys, for letting me see an example of the *SdKfz 7* that is in the shops now. I believe that Amerang are the UK importers.

Publications

Issue 42/4 is the most recent copy of *Tankette* to arrive. The regular little magazine for members of MAFVA is an A5 format publication, produced by the membership. Moving home has had a major impact it seems for the editor, Neil Wharton, hence the delay and a shortage of text articles in this issue. It does carry notices in memorial for both Mick Bell and Jim Marshall. A fair few scale drawings make up the bulk of this issue, led by an unusual and interesting 1:76 scale snow removal unit, the SP 5 ton 6x4 rotary all wheel drive Type 54. It features a Commer cab, plus twin axles at the front, along with the snowbrushes and discharge chutes and a box body on the back. An interesting challenge for a scratch builder this one! Then the *3.7cm Pak Auf UE* drawn in 1:25 scale by Hubert Cance, a 1:48 scale Char Renault D1 by Mick Bell, who also did the 1:35 scale Vickers Armstrong Light Amphibious tank L143. Add a two-page feature on the planned Advance Amphibious Assault Vehicle planned for the US Marines, and there you have the latest issue. *Tankette* comes with being a member of MAFVA, and details are available from Gary Williams, 45 Balmoral Drive, Holmes Chapel, Cheshire, CW4 7JQ. mafvahq@aol.com

In its most up-to-date format, this is Issue 6 in the current series of magazines from *Minitracks*, published in France, and printed with French/English dual language throughout, this is the one magazine devoted to small scale modelling. Articles in this issue begin with a background article on the British Mark V* tank from WW1. It is followed with a diorama for 1940, featuring a Mark V* in French colours being passed by an Adler *Kfz 13*. The model demonstrates how deep the French army dug into any reserve they could find to throw it into action during Blitzkrieg. It uses the RPM Adler with the Cromwell Models MarkV*. Next model has the Convoy Models Stz 5 Soviet tractor hauling the PST 122mm howitzer, made into a neat bridge crossing diorama. Also a good sign in my view that both these articles mix 1:76 scale and 1:72 scale models quite happily.

The next background feature and following model details the Char B1 bis and Somua S35 in use in 1944-45, with French forces in NW Europe, using re-acquired equipment. The model is the 1:72 scale model from Retrokit. Next are some photos of restored AFVs at a show in Mons, then a build up of the Ace PT76. Following are four linked articles on the French Army GMC truck, including an unusual armoured variant used in the Middle East. Models, photos, history, colour profiles, all are put together in one block. Tips on how to paint realistic corrugated iron buildings and then a build up on the Revell *Nashorn*. Add news of new releases and there you have it, a very neat, quarterly magazine. Available from Editions du Barbotin, 25, rue des Jardins, 91160 Ballainvilliers, France. ■

Atten-Shun!

The Product Review Column

● The Editor welcomes product samples for review. Unless a prior arrangement has been made with the Editor review samples WILL NOT be returned.

All product samples intended for review in the 'Atten-Shun!' column should be sent to:

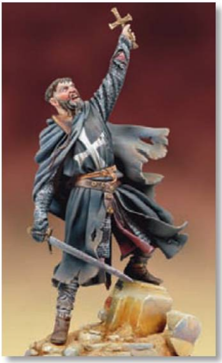
The Editor
'Atten-Shun!'
Military Modelling
PO Box 6017
Leighton Buzzard
LU7 2FA

● Tel/fax: 01525 370389
● E-mail: ken.jones@magicalia.com

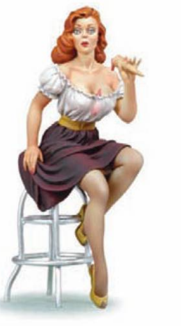
Andrea Miniatures

First from Andrea Miniatures' new releases to be opened was a large 90mm figure entitled, frighteningly, 'The Wrath of God' (Kit No: S8-F46). It is of a knight from the Crusades, the box top shows a Knight Templar, but it could also be painted as any of the chivalric orders that took part in the Crusades.

For such a large kit there are not many parts, 11 in white metal and one, the very nicely detailed base, in resin. Included is a paint chart and on the box itself are four, full-colour photographs of a very nicely painted example. The sculpting is very well executed, especially face, which is almost demonic in its intensity. It all slotted together reasonably well after a little light fettling, removal of mould lines (no flash on my example!) and some final sanding. As those of you who might already be collecting this series, which includes three other foot figures and two mounted ones, this latest offering is in the same league, but I must add, this one's pose is probably more dynamic than the earlier ones. Also, I do like the torn chain mail and the somewhat tatty cloak; this chap has surely been in the wars. The Wrath of God retails at £52.55 + £5.25 p&p from Historex Agents.



Now, I'm not one for 'girlie' figures and the rash of almost pornographic ones frankly, to me at least, has no place in our hobby. However, I will also state that I am certainly not a prude and the latest series of 'Pin-Up' figures from Andrea are most tastefully done, extremely charming and, for older guys like me, are a reminder of times gone by when that great illustrator, Vargas, titillated us with his beautifully drawn young ladies. At Euro Militaire this year, one of the 'Pin-Up' series figures, 'Watch the Birdie' was entered in competition and won a well-deserved Gold medal for Julio Cabos, which just shows how innocent these figures are, and also, more importantly, how the judges view them when, in years gone by, they have thrown out the more raunchy 'girlie' figures. I should add that it was exquisitely painted, I only wish I could get skin tones like that!



Anyway, the latest in this line is Pin-Up 04, 'Cold Strawberry' and is the usual nubile young lady in a precarious situation when the strawberry topping on her ice cream has fallen off and dropped down her cleavage. The kit consists of seven parts for the figure that, incidentally, is in 80mm scale, and a further seven to make up the soda fountain stool she sits on, all in white metal. The square base, however, is in resin. The sculpting is, as with all these 'Pin-Up' figures is to the highest standard, and the casting matches it. There's not much more one can say except I do recommend it, especially if you want to practice your flesh painting skills and have a lovely little figure at the end. Charming! Price is £31 +£3.95 p&p. Both figures are available from Historex Agents, Wellington House, 157 Snargate Street, Dover, Kent CT17 9BZ. Tel: 01304 206720. Fax: 01304 204528. sales@historex-agents.co.uk www.historexagents.com

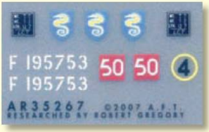
Charles Davis

Prices in text

Andrea Miniatures, S.L., Los Talleras, 21-Pol. Ind., de Alpedrete 28430 Alpedrete, Madrid, Spain. sales@andrea-miniatures.com www.andrea-miniatures.com

Archer Fine Transfers

As well as being used by Armoured Regiments, the Humber Scout Car also formed part of the equipment of Armoured Brigades. The War Establishment allocated seven to the 'Fighting Group' of each Brigade. One was specifically for the Captain, Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers while the others could be used as required for transport under fire, reconnaissance or similar tasks.



Archer's 1:35 scale set of transfers (AR35267) depicts a Scout Car operated by 27th Armoured Brigade around D-Day based on photographic reference, which shows it carried a Bren gun with 100-round drum magazine and had been fitted for wading though the gear had been removed. Markings consist of the Brigade's seahorse sign including one spare, the white 50 on red square arm of service mark with the style of numbers patterned from photos, plus vehicle census numbers, bridge classification disc and information panel showing the vehicle's dimensions and weights for shipping purposes.

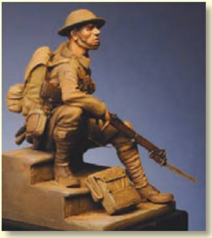
Instructions take the form of coloured side and partial front, rear and top views showing where each marking goes. The set can be used with any of the available 1:35 scale resin or plastic kits of the Humber Scout Car. Note that these are rubdown transfers, not waterslide decals found in most kits. However they can be used in conjunction with suitable decal sheet and details of both methods of using them can be found on the Archer Website.

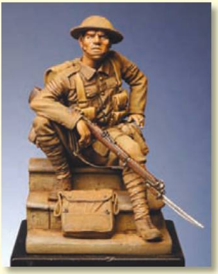
Price in the United States is $6.95. Archer items are stocked in the UK by Historex Agents and SB Models while there are many other dealers worldwide. Contact or see their Website www.archertransfers.com for more details. Thanks to Robert Gregory for sending the set for review.

Peter Brown

Price $6.95

Archer Fine Transfers, PO Box 1277, Youngsville, NC 27596-1277, USA.





JMD Miniatures

Once again the French firm of JMD has come up with an absolute 'cracker' in the form of a British 'Tommy' from WWI that, it appears, is this company's favourite period (Kit No. JMD023).

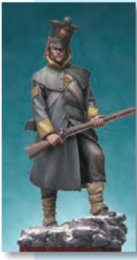
When I first saw the box top photo, I must admit I was smitten. This is a figure of the highest quality, in its sculpting by Jean-Marie Danel and its casting that is so crisp and it fits together so tightly that, I assure, you, you will need no filler. It is rarely that I mention who painted the box top example, but in this instance, it is merited and is by Daniel Ipperti who, incidentally, also took the two (a front view on the box and a rear view inside along with the painting instructions - in French, I'm afraid!) and another photo of actual British pattern equipment used during the First World War.

The kit consists of 10 parts, including a base in the shape of three steps onto which the figure is sitting. As mentioned, the parts are exquisitely cast, but do be careful of the SMLE rifle and its attached bayonet as it is rather fragile. I could continue eulogising about this kit for ages, but suffice it to say, *go and buy it!* You won't be disappointed and, JDM, please keep 'em coming! JMD023 retails at £20.10 + £2.95 p&p and is available from Historex Agents, Wellington House, 157 Snargate Street, Dover, Kent CT17 9BZ. Tel: 01304 206720. Fax: 01304 204528. sales@historex-agents.co.uk www.historexagents.com

Charles Davis

Price in text

JMD Miniatures, 1 residence des Broucks, 59279 Craywick, France. Tel: 03 28 20 31 82 jmdcrc@aol.com www.jmd-miniatures.com



Latorre Miniatures

How many of us still remember that day when the incomparable Bill Horan arrived at Euro Militaire with his superb 'Last Stand at Gandamak' diorama? I was among the ones who were lucky enough to be there, I'm pleased to say, and it left a lasting impression on me.

A few years later, another master modeller arrived for the first time at the show, this time a (very) young Spaniard, Raúl Garcia Latorre. This young man had such a prodigious talent that I felt it was unfair and wanted just a teeny bit of it, he had so much he would not have missed it! Anyway, the reason behind my reminiscing is that the latter went on to form his own model company, Latorre Models, and his latest figure is a member of the famed 44th of Foot at Gandamak in 1842 (Kit No. 54/16).

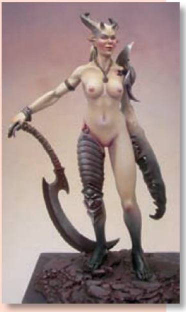
Does this figure stand up to those fantastically life like, scratch built figures of Bill's? Well, in this case it does. The 54mm figure was sculpted and the box top example painted by Raul himself, this could quite easily stand alongside those that appeared on that diorama of Bill's. Not that it needs to as it can standalone quite easily. The kit comes in seven parts plus a base, all crisply cast in white metal. There was very little 'flash' on the review sample and the mould lines were easily removed. The anatomy is 'spot on' and the pose in keeping with the occasion, the parts fit together well, in fact I have difficulty finding any fault except the painting instructions are a little sparse and they are all in Spanish. This is a great figure that we have come to expect from this particular studio and I can only recommend it - 54/16 is available from Historex Agents, Wellington House, 157 Snargate Street, Dover, Kent CT17 9BZ. Tel: 01304 206720. Fax: 01304 204528. sales@historex-agents.co.uk www.historexagents.com

Charles Davis

Price £14.25 + £1.95p&p

Latorre Models, c/Santa Maria, 16 local, 29649, Mijas Costa, Malaga, Spain. Tel/fax: (34) 952 197662 info@latorremodels.com www.latorremodels.com

JMD Miniatures



JMD, the France-based company that specialises in marvellous WWI figures, has once again, released ' something completely different' as the Monty Python crowd were wont to say in their surreal comedy shows. And this new figure is completely in keeping with Monty Python as it is a fantasy figure. Titled 'Démonette' Kit No. ACC002R), it is the second in the series, the first, you might remember, being Archeon.

Sculpted to the company's usual high standard by Allan Carrasco, it has a distinctly 'female' form, stands around 75mm on the supplied base and is crisply cast in grey resin. She, and I say that loosely, has a long lobster-like claw as a left arm/hand and horns on her head. She rests her right hand on a vicious looking elongated scythe-like weapon. The upper right thigh is encased in a type of armour. In the box there is photo of a painted example, also by Allan Carrasco, and a number of sketches that, I suppose, will be of some help. The 'anatomy' is very well done and, for all you fantasy fans, this is a figure that will look good on the shelf although, I must admit, it will look a tad out of place on mine! This is one figure that, I think, I will pass on to a good friend of mine who is really 'in' to this type of thing. ACC002R is available from Historex Agents, Wellington House, 157 Snargate Street, Dover, Kent CT17 9BZ. Tel: 01304 206720. Fax: 01304 204528. sales@historex-agents.co.uk www.historexagents.com

Charles Davis

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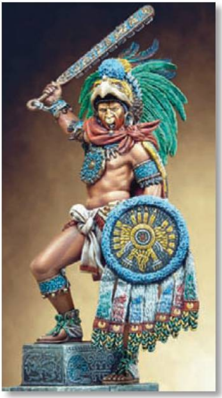
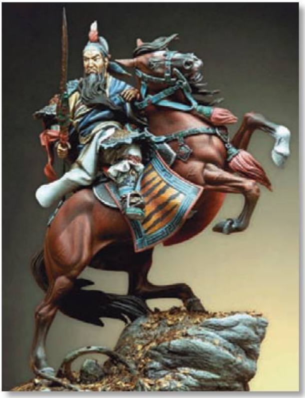
JMD Miniatures, 1 residence des Broucks, 59279 Craywick, France. Tel: 03 28 20 31 82 jmdcrc@aol.com www.jmd-miniatures.com





Pegaso

A nice mixed bag from Pegaso this month, in fact, I would go so far as to say, a little something for everyone although there's no Napoleonic figure in this batch, However, after last month's exquisite mounted trumpeter, they can be forgiven.

I shall kick off with the 75 mm offering in the shape of Montezuma, Emperor of the Aztecs (Kit No. 75-042). Sculpted by Andrea Jula to his usual high standard, the figure consists of around 19 parts, including a very nice base, crisply cast in Pegaso's usual white metal medium. If you like colourful figures, then this is one for you. In addition, there is quite a lot of bare flesh to practice your skin tone techniques on. The face is especially well done and, with a good paint job, will really come 'alive'. I cannot find fault with the anatomy of the figure and the assembly was pretty straightforward, but do be careful to get the headdress correct, there's lots of feathers and they have to go on in the correct order…and there's no instructions. There is, as usual, Pegaso's excellent historical background and painting instruction in four languages. This is, to my mind, a neglected period of history for the modeller and the figure manufacturing fraternity and one that I find fascinating. Here we have a mighty empire that collapsed so quickly, forced into submission by a mere handful of Spanish Conquistadors. Andrea recently released a book about it with many fine illustrations that would come in handy alongside this kit and, if I recall, is not very expensive. So, read the book, buy the kit, and enjoy yourself! It's a pity that Christmas has just passed as they would have made a perfect addition to the 'Wish list'. 75-042 retails at £33.90 + £3.95 p&p from Historex Agents

ASL-026 is another in the PegasObjects series of building sections for a figure base. This on is a Medieval Castle corner consisting of a cobbled base, a square opening with an escutcheon over it on one side and, on the other, and a half columned, arched portico. It has been mastered by Luca Piergentili, a new name to me, but seemingly very talented. The kit comprises six parts of crisply cast resin and they fit together neatly with the aid of pegs and holes. Unlike many other kits that have this type of assembly, these lined up perfectly and went together very tight. On the review example, I didn't have recourse to any filler at all. Once again, this is not something I require immediately, so into the 'stash' it goes, waiting for the day, and I know it will arrive, when it will be 'just the job' to enhance a figure (and it need not be a medieval one either!) I've just finished. ASL-026 retails at £20.60 + £2.95 p&p.

Now to this month's pièce de résistance, a mounted 90mm figure of a Chinese General from the 3rd Century AD (Kit No. 90-911) sculpted by that amazing talent Victor Konnov. The kit consists of a myriad of white metal pieces, too numerous to count but, believe me, there's a lot of them! As the figure is seated on a rearing horse and, from previous experience, rearing horses in white metal tend to 'sag' after a while; I was pleased to see that the two rear legs have steel rods cast into them to prevent such an occurrence. In fact Pegaso says…'Steel Sticks (sic) inserted inside the horse legs to absolutely guarantee the stability and the strength of the horse'.

Now to the actual figure! It represents one of the greatest heroes of ancient Chinese culture, Guan Yu (AD 162- 219) who was a renowned warrior and general under the Emperor Shu Han, the last of the Han Dynasty monarchs. As mentioned earlier, the kit has many parts but they all fit together very well. I know that my colleague, Ian Parsons of Chief Steward at Euro Militaire fame and a superb figure painter to boot, ordered one as soon as he heard about it, so I asked him for his comments. Says Ian, 'on first opening the hefty box, my first reaction was 'Wow!' Once I got down to fitting the pieces together, I realised just how good the kit was, as it required hardly any filler and, even then just a little around a few joints, most of which could be filled with gap-filling super glue. In fact, I was lucky to find even that fault, as I was worried that it was going to paint itself, the kit is that good.' I won't even try to add anything to that endorsement. Yes, there's no doubt that the kit isn't exactly cheap, but the amount of work and enjoyment the modeller will gain from it will more than compensate for the high price. Highly recommended for, as they say, the discerning modeller. (90-911 retails at £166.10 +£5.25 p&p.

The final kit from Pegaso this month is from the Platoon spin-off series of WW2 1:35 scale figures featuring, for the most part, troops from the opposing forces. This month's offering is a German *Fallschirmjäger* (Kit No. PT-040) sculpted by Tony Williams. He wears the German para's smock and helmet and is carrying a MG42 (I think!) under his arm with ammo belts draped around his shoulders. Crisply cast in seven parts, all in the usual grey resin, the figure will be useful addition to any WWII diorama featuring these warriors. PT-040 retails at £11.55 + £1.95 p&p

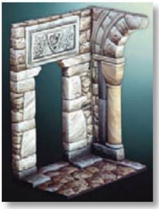
Finally, I notice that Pegaso have released their latest catalogue, PEGCAT2007, featuring all their kits, which is quite a few and some that I had forgotten about and which I shall have to get. It retails at just £9.85 + .95p p&p, has 80 pages and is in full colour. A very useful publication to have around.

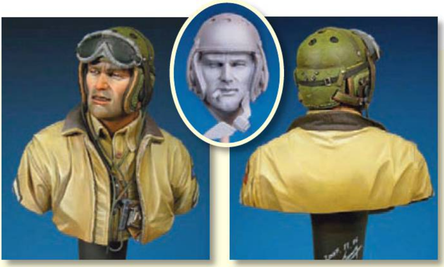
Pegaso kits are available in the UK from Historex Agents (who also supplied the review samples), Wellington House, 157 Snargate Street, Dover, Kent CT17 9BZ.
Tel: 01304 206720. Fax: 01304 204528.
sales@historex-agents.co.uk
www.historexagents.com

Charles Davis

Prices in text

Pegaso Models srl, C.P.n. 99 Siena Centro,
53100 Siena, Italy. pegasomodels@si.nettuno.it
www.pegasomodels.com





Young Miniatures

Young Miniatures, the Korea-based manufacturer's latest offering is another in their 1:10 scale busts and this time it is a US Tank Crewman from the European Theatre of Operations in the Second World War. (Kit No. YM1808). As usual, the sculpting cannot be faulted and, although there are just a few parts to the kit, including a choice of two heads and a base 'riser', it will give hours of enjoyment. Included with the kit is a length of copper wire for the headphone cables. Why two heads? No, they are certainly not identical, one has his goggles on the tanker's helmet while the other doesn't, but has a cigarette dangling from the corner of his mouth. So you really do have two heads to paint, if you wish. The face is superb and by Young B. Song who also, incidentally, painted the box top example, has mastered the whole bust and if you can do as well, you'll have a super bust to grace your shelf. There's no painting instruction but, on reflection, one perhaps really isn't required. YM 1808 is available from Historex Agents, Wellington House, 157 Snargate Street, Dover, Kent CT17 9BZ. Tel: 01304 206720. Fax: 01304 204528.
sales@historex-agents.co.uk
www.historexagents.com

Charles Davis

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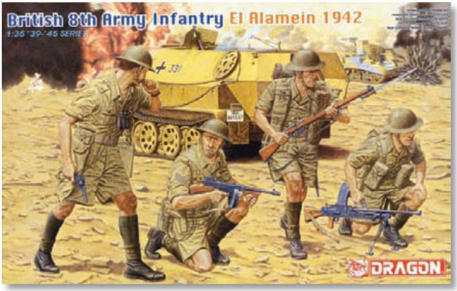
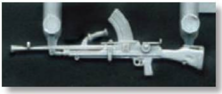
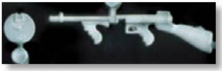

British 8th Army Infantry El Alamein 1942
1:35 '39-'45 SERIES
DRAGON

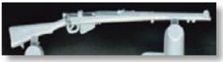




Dragon Models Ltd

I became rather excited when I saw that Dragon were to release some injection moulded plastic, British 8th Army Infantry figures, Kit No. 6390 in their 1:35 scale '39-'45 Series - recognition at last, I thought. However, when they arrived I must confess I was a bit disappointed - especially with the equipment, which hadn't been given the 'Gen 2' treatment - like the hoards of German kits available from this leading manufacturer have. The figures themselves are fine; one or two small points here and there, most noticeable are the steel helmets, which are a bit too high in the crown, giving them a bit of a domed appearance, rather than the subtle curves they should have - but there's always Hornet replacement heads!

There are four figures in the box - an officer, an NCO, a Bren gunner and his No.2 for whom extra pouches for Bren magazines are provided. All are wearing KD shirts and shorts, woollen stockings and cloth puttees, steel helmets and 1937 Pattern web equipment.



There is plenty of conversion potential here now Dragon has provided the basic forms, and they could be used with slight modification and replacement heads for tank crew. A flick through books with pictures of British troops in North Africa gave me some inspiration for conversions.

For British infantry in North Africa in 1942 the choice of weapons wouldn't be great - Lee Enfield rifles, Bren light machine guns and pistols predominated. The only submachine gun available in any numbers at the time was the .45 cal Thompson 1928 model which the British bought from America, for cash, for its forces until home designed guns were put into production. This kit has one of the weapons' sprues from British Infantry Normandy 1944 (6212) to provide the Bren LMG and bipods; the No.4 Rifles and Sten submachine gun on this sprue are surplus for 1942. However, a Lee Enfield Mark III rifle and bayonet and a Thompson SMG and 50 round drum magazine are included on the main sprue... and these are the disappointing bits. With German kits we get Mauser rifles with slide moulded hollow muzzles and separate bolts, open and shut - but the weapons in this kit are a bit 'clunky' solid rear sight guides on the Thompson and the trigger guard on the Lee Enfield Mark III rifle is over thick! Nit picking? I don't think so, if Dragon can set good standards with weapons and equipment in the US and German figure sets, why not in this one? Incidentally, the illustrations of assembled figures on the back of the box shows someone has actually cut off the Bren's magazine and glued back on the wrong way. I wonder why?

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Ken Jones

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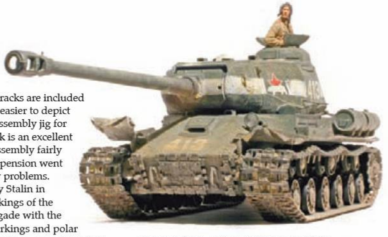
Tamiya



The IS-2 Stalin has long been one of my favourite tanks, so I was very happy to hear that Tamiya was adding it to their growing list of 1:35 scale Allied Second World War tanks. Tamiya brings its traditional hallmarks of easy assembly and sharp detail to this new rendition Kit No.35289 of the Stalin heavy tank.

I've always thought that the IS-2 was the best looking Soviet tank of the war, but I wanted to add a bit of character to the Tamiya model. I fully expected that the kit would be a shake-'n-bake: throw in a tube of cement, shake the box, out pops a lovely model! So I wanted to do something to distinguish my model and the most obvious approach would be to add some texture to the cast armour, and to bang up the fenders, but neither of these approaches are especially necessary and modellers will find historical photos of IS tanks in relatively clean condition with rather smooth casting. However, the Stalin tank does provide an opportunity for texture and bashing.

The Tamiya kit is quite good on most of the detail, but I noticed a lot of little things that can use attention. For example, the fuel drums in the kit are provided with moulded-on straps and they do not connect properly to the mounting racks below. Also, I built the suspension 'out-of-the-box' and chose to use the kit's hard-plastic tracks (vinyl tracks are included too) as these make it easier to depict track sag. Tamiya's assembly jig for the upper run of track is an excellent idea and made the assembly fairly easy. Overall, the suspension went together without any problems.

I planned to do my Stalin in the well-known markings of the 7th Guards Tank Brigade with the distinctive Berlin markings and polar bear insignia. The numbers came from dry transfer sheets, the 7th Guards Tank Brigade marking came from the kit's decal sheet, whereas the tank name *Yastreb* (Hawk) came from a set of Russian Civil War decals I had in the decal bin.

The commander figure I chose was the resin Alpine Russian Officer (35013) but I substituted another Alpine tanker's head for the head in the set. The Alpine stuff is beautifully sculpted and a pleasure to paint.

Overall, the Tamiya IS-2 is a lovely kit to build, and its ease of assembly encouraged me to push the limit on texturing the model. A variety of casting effects can be undertaken on this model since several different casting plants were involved, and the texture varied from quite rough to quite smooth, which provides some welcome individuality to the model. See the next issue of ***Military Modelling*** – No.3 which is a 100-page AFV Special for a full building feature on Tamiya's new IS-2 kit, with lots of photos of the real thing.

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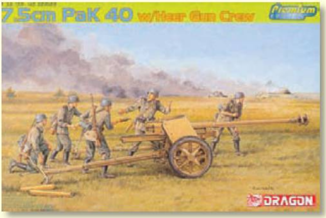
Steve Zaloga

Price £25.99 rrp

Tamiya, 3-7 Ondawara, Shizuoka City, Japan.
http://www.tamiya.com/english/e-home.htm


7.5cm PaK 40 w/Heer Gun Crew
Premium
DRAGON

Dragon Models Ltd

Dragon has now released a 'Premium' version of their 1:35 scale '39-'45 Series Kit No. 6433*7.5cm PaK 40* kit w/*Heer* Gun Crew, using the corrected and updated 'Late' version of the kit with a nice new crew and five sprues of their generic German kit.

Surprisingly, especially as it is a 'Premium' version, this kit now no longer includes the turned aluminium barrel or turned ammo rounds. It retains the four vinyl (I think; not sure if they are actually black DS plastic or not) tyres, either new or 'chewed up.' The kit provides for options in regard to three different styles of wheels and three different styles of muzzle brakes (each formed of a casting and a face, with the casting being hollow moulded.) Also, the modeller has optional positions for shields, trails, suspension arms, breechblock, and gun servicing panels. The gun is fixed, however, so traverse must be set during assembly.

The gun shield is now offered as either two injection moulded styrene sections or a pair of preformed brass ones with turned brass bolts for standoff (in a similar manner to the AFV Club 8.8cm Pak 41 kit). Both use a brass gun mask between them. The plastic part edges are 'feathered' to a knife-edge, so the modeller winds up with a shield that looks thin, but is actually quite sturdy and easy to attach.

The kit provides a very nice 'Gen1' set of new DML figures with a five-man crew provided. Each figure comes in six basic parts, but only one set of arms, unlike the great option in the DML 15 cm gun crew set. The figures appear as designated closer to the Army styles of uniforms and are in standard uniforms, no fancy smocks or other variations. The now common GA and GB sprues are provided, and this set comes with a full issue set of Mauser rifles for use by the crew.

The *PaK 40* sprues are provided complete with a few 'tweaks' to the moulds, and it provides eight AP rounds, two ammo crates and a number of shipping tubes and three expended cases. The latter two items have been 'slide moulded' with open ends for better definition and more options. Most of the Cartograf decals are primarily for these parts and provide the necessary stencils in both black and white. Since guns rarely bear any markings other than stray 'serviced on' decals, there are none included.

Finishing options are for but two weapons, one in sand brown and one in grey. Overall this is a nice upgrade to a well-designed kit and again should prove popular in a diorama.

Sprue Layout

A55 Pak 40 lower carriage
B63 Pak 40 upper carriage
C31 Pak 40 ammo shipping material and eight rounds
D8 Pak 40 wheel centres, gun shield
E4 Black vinyl tires
GA68 German kit: helmets, canteens, mess tins, bayonets
GB56 German kit: ammo pouches, bread bags, ponchos
WA18x3 German weapons: 2 x Kar 98K and accessories
6433 76 Army gun crew (5 figures) for antitank guns
MA 5 Etched brass
MB20 Etched brass
MC2 Pre-formed etched brass
MC12 Turned brass bolts

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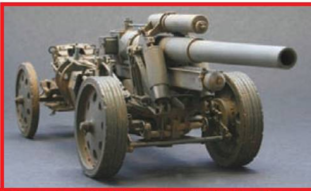
1:35 '39-'45 SERIES
GERMAN sFH 18 HOWITZER w/LIMBER
Smart Kit
DRAGON



There's a lot of photos of Dragon's sFH 18 built by Vinnie Branigan on the Military Modelling Website: www.militarymodelling.com

Dragon Models Ltd

In 1995 Peter Brown and I took one of our 'World Tours' to North Devonshire and the Cobbaton Combat Collection, a private military museum. The owner and director, Preston Isaac, met us and proved to be quite a character. Upon introducing myself, his first words were, "I don't like Americans!" A bit crestfallen, I was caught off guard, but a moment later when he said, "All I have is a Jeep and that ex-ranges Sherman V over there." Now sorted, we got some tea and coffee and he gave us the grand tour.

One of his pride and joy displays was an ex-Czech OT-810 with a large if unfamiliar artillery piece next to it. It was odd as it looked to be a cross between Czech, Soviet and German designs. When Peter and I gave up, he proudly stated it was a Czech Army deep reserve weapon – a Soviet 152mm D-1 howitzer barrel mated to a German *sFH 18* carriage, as the Czechs wound up with plenty of the latter, but needed to conform to Warsaw Pact standards. The fact that the Czechs used a 1934 design carriage up until 1989 speaks volumes of what a good design this weapon really was.

Developed as part of a 'duo' of guns in the 1920s by Krupp, one common carriage was created for either the *10cm Kanone 18* field gun or the *15cm schwere Feldhaubitze 18* field howitzer. The former proved to be too light a calibre for the heavy carriage, so the main production version was the *sFH 18* howitzer. Weighting about six metric tons, the *sFH 18* was mostly deployed in battalions of three batteries of four howitzers each, and as they were too heavy for horse drayage they were towed by the eight-ton *SdKfz 7* halftrack fitted with lockers for the 15cm ammunition.

The 149mm weapon could fire a 43.5 kilogram HE-FRAG round to a maximum range of 13,325 metres. However, even though relatively plentiful in the German forces it was inferior to most of the American 155mm guns, Soviet 152mm gun-howitzers, and British 5.5in guns. Improved versions never got into production and only one self-propelled variant, the *Hummel*, saw production in meaningful numbers.

As towed artillery never seems to get the 'press' of the self-propelled types, it's not surprising that this important artillery piece has been nearly totally ignored in plastic over the years. (Roco did make a 'duo' in 1:87 scale with both the 10cm and 15cm barrels, as well as the *SdKfz 7* prime mover.) Once again, however, there are *two* kits of this gun due out in the coming months, and again DML is first to the front with its variant. A 'Smart Kit', this model comes with a minimum of brass – only two parts and two more in etched nickel – as it covers most of the rest in well-designed plastic.

DML has pulled out all of its tricks to get a very nice result with their 1:35 scale kit of the *sFH 18* Howitzer w/Limber as a 'Smart Kit' (6392) in the '39-'45 Series. The heavy rubber tyred disk wheels are 'slide moulded' with the injection mould points at the top rim of the wheel, to ensure fast and easy cleanup while moulding all of the grooves in place. The same goes for the much thinner limber wheels. The trails are hollow moulded using similar techniques.

The gun proper (totally new, not borrowed from the recently upgraded *Hummel*) consists of the complete barrel in turned aluminium and a 10-piece styrene breech assembly with optional position three-piece breechblock. ('Do not cement' say the directions!) Two of the brass parts, the tubes, are used for the elevation cylinders. The nickel parts cover the gun's data plate and the stamped metal firing table placed in front of the gunner's position. The two etched brass parts are the linkages on the parking brakes.

The gun has an incredible amount of detail to it and even the limber consists of no less than 30 parts. The spades are optional position and the kit is designed so that the gun may be left assembled with a friction fit so it may be displayed either in march order (racked up, trails on the limber) or in firing position. This may not work quite as well as the directions indicate, but it is nice to know you may have a longer time frame to make a selection on towed or firing displays.

The gun comes with five HE-FRAG and five HE-FRAG concrete penetrators with 10 propellant casings and propellant covers for five. The kit also comes with a pair of unrolled wicker mats for storing clean, prepared ammunition next to the gun in firing position as well as four rounds in wicker packing and what appear to be either fuse or primer cases; all of these parts are in tan DS plastic to capture crisp features on otherwise difficult parts to mould.

GERMAN FIELD HOWITZER GUN CREW
1:35 '39-'45 SERIES
DRAGON

The sights are clear styrene parts that seem to be popular, but still have to be painted. A sheet of generic artillery decals from Cartograf is included along with 'kill' rings and generic ammunition placards for the packing and rounds. Five finishing schemes (three grey, one sand and one tricolour camouflage) are provided but no units or locations.

Technical assistance on this project came from Tom Cockle and Gary Edmundson, and the project director was Hirohisa Takada. Box art from Ron Volstad (he always tends to get the 'A' kits, and does them right by his artwork!)

Overall this is a welcome change and a nod to the fact that artillery pieces need 'Smart Kit' treatment too! Dragon has just released a Premium Edition kit for a howitzer crew (*Kit No. 6461 £9.50 rrp illustrated here*), but more importantly we now need a new prime mover to replace the 33-year-old Tamiya kit... (I would call for the Czech reserve version, but that would seem to be a cyber-hobby.com option!)

Sprue breakout

A66 Gun cradle, trails and breech assemblies
B29 Fittings and cleaning rods
C26 Lower mount and axle details
D33x2 Main wheels, limber wheels, trail spades
E21 Limber components
G15 15 cm ammunition
K3 Clear styrene
L10 DS plastic matting and packed shells
MA2 etched brass
MB2 etched nickel
MC1 turned aluminium
MC2 brass tubing

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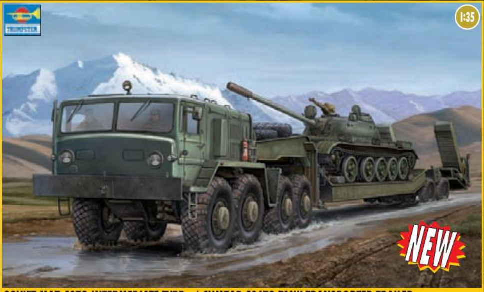

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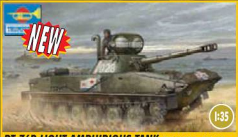

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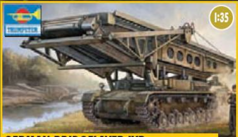
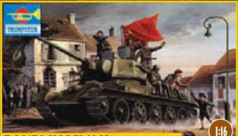
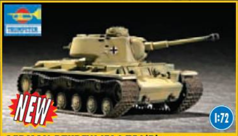


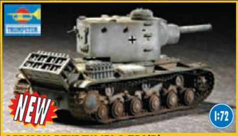
GERMAN BRIDGELAYER IVB TM00390 £24.99



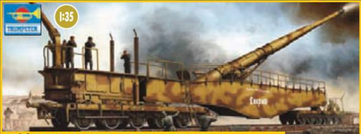
T-34/76 MODEL 1943 TM00903 £89.95



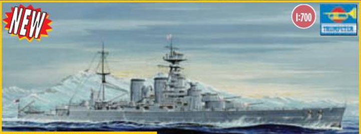
GERMAN PZKPFW KV-1 756(R) TM07265 £6.99



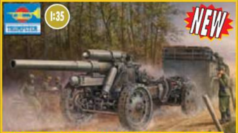
GERMAN PZKPFW KV-2 754(R) TM07266 £6.99



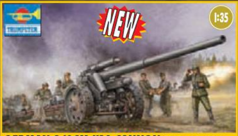
K5(E) 28CM LEOPOLD GERMAN RAILGUN TM00207 £79.95



HMS HOOD 1931 TM05741 £15.99



15CM S.FH18 FIELD HOWITZER TM02304 £16.99



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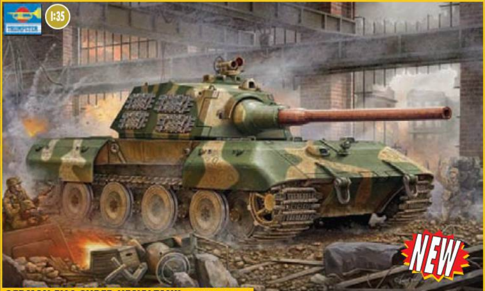

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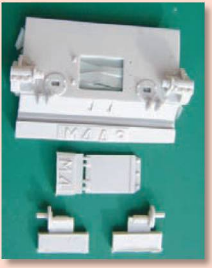
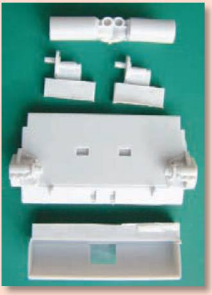
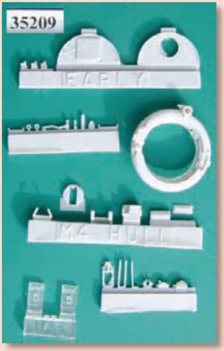




Tiger Model Designs

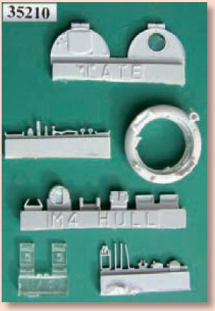
In recent months several 1:35 scale plastic Shermans have been released which added to those already available offers the modeller a wide range of items to choose from. As kits tend to get better with each new release, most of the new offerings need little improvement, but some can stand extra details. These new sets from Tiger Model Designs provide several improvement options, all cleanly cast in pale grey resin.

A very simple one is 25201 with M4 Final Drive Housings for DML or Dragon, as they are also known. A pair of these is provided which are far better detailed than the plastic versions, being the correct size - those on the M4A2 Tarawa/Sherman III kit for example are too small - as well as including the splines seen on the original as well as surface details and casting numbers which the kit items do not. No instructions are included but they are a straight replacement for kit items so do not really need them. Price is a reasonable US$5.00.



Also for Dragon's M4A2 series kits is 25403 M4A2 Rear Armour and Exhaust. While Dragon depict the silencers and exhaust arrangement using several parts, some details where the silencer cylinders meet the small outlet pipes is missing which are included as a one-part resin casting. A replacement rear plate for the hull below the 'overhang' is also included, it has idler mountings cast in place, but the stub axles for the idlers are separate. This allows them to be positioned at a variety of angles, mimicking the original, which could be rotated eccentrically to take up track sag. Another welcome feature is the curved exhaust deflector, which is not included in kits. Again no instructions are included, assembly will be straightforward and the parts easily adapted to any M4A2 or M10 kit. Price is USD$12.50.

Set 25501 M4A3 Rear Armour with Idlers is a similar offering for DML/Dragon M4A3 vehicles. It has the lower rear plate with a separate engine access door and the idlers as in 25403, but no other items, so exhaust fishtails and deflectors will need to be taken from the donor kit. Again they should be adaptable to several kits of Ford-engined tanks. Price is USD$9.50□. Two very similar sets provide highly detailed 'split ring' cupola hatches, which will be suitable for many different kits. While most plastic versions of this item are acceptable, they tend to miss the various fittings



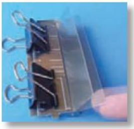
around the inner face of the rotating rim and the locking handle for the machine gun cradle, and not all have clear periscopes. These sets address both these issues and have a lot of small parts, which will need care and a fair amount of skill to assemble.

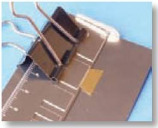
Set 35209 M4 Low (Early) Split-Hatch Cupola with Clear Periscope covers the earlier style while 35210 M4 High (Late) Split-Hatch Cupola with Clear Periscope depicts the later version. The terms 'Low' and 'High' suggest fitting to low-bustle turrets designed for the original small hull hatches or high-bustle castings for tanks with the simplified hill, which used larger hatches. Both sets come with instructions and they need them! Assembly is described in words with photos to show each step. Design and parts breakdown are similar, the main differences being in the rim and hatch flaps which have casting markings cast in and there are choices for the clips to hold the external machine gun in place with the early spring clip and later folding strip as appropriate. To assemble, one flap need to have the periscope in its separate ring fitted, this allows positioning at any suitable angle, while the other has outside grab and inside locking handles to fit. Both have small locking devices to go inside near the hinge and there are also tiny rings for their release. Two clear M6 pattern periscopes and the small hinged covers are provided as well as the protective cage fitted over them so one of the other turret periscopes can also be replaced. Fitting these to any suitable kit will improve it, though it will need care and attention. Both sets come priced at USD$12.50 which reflects the number of small parts. Karl van Sweden who makes masters for TMD sent these sets for review.

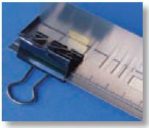
Peter Brown

Prices in text

Tiger Model Designs, 1303 Connecticut Ave, Lynn Haven, FL32444 USA.
www.tigermodels.com







RB Productions

Ever the enterprising engineer, Radu Brinzan brings us yet another superb product that will make itself at home in anyone's 'useful tools' collection. The 'Flip-R10' photo-etched bending tool is a unique and new design that is meant to compliment any existing etched tool you may already have or are planning to get.

While the existing tools on the market are essentially complex clamps that hold the part in place, the Flip-R10 relies on a 'flipping' action to execute its duties. As you can see from the accompanying images it is quite adept at its task.

I had some questions for Radu about the tool, and after a few e-mails back and forth I was very confident and pleased in the fact that I had the tool explained to me fully, and its intention was clear. This is not meant to be a complex tool like the other 'metal assist' tools that are available, and thus not intended to be any sort of competition for them. It is a hand tool, that will prove to be invaluable in many situations where use of the larger, hard based tools are not necessary, and ideal in situations where the modeller will need to make a simple bend in an etched part (or parts) quickly. In Radu's own words describing why a comparison between existing etched clamps and the Flip-R10 would be inappropriate: 'it would be like comparing a knife to a scissors, they both cut, but they do it in different ways...'

It is a robust and compact tool, which combines sturdiness, with convenience and due to its small size; it will reside comfortably out of the way on the workbench without causing any overcrowding. However, I would recommend some care when assembling it and in particular when using it, as Radu states clearly in the instructions that it will be damaged if used with any other materials aside from photo-etched parts. Most of the photo-etched parts modellers use are specifically prepared for bending with small grooves etched in that facilitate bending, and this tool is designed for that.

While Radu's existing market is primarily within the aircraft modelling fraternity, I think this will be an excellent crossover device, and it will find itself equally at home on the armour modeller's workbench as well. At €25 for the tool, it is good value for money in my opinion, and a tool that will provide years of usefulness in many situations.

The 'Flip-R10' is available from various outlets such as MRD, NetMerchants and Eagle Editions or Radu at RB Productions direct.

Jay Laverty

Price €25.00

RB Productions www.radub.com

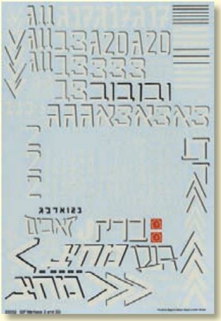
Bison Decals

Bison Decals has released a series of sets covering Israeli armour subjects from the 1960s to the present. In a change from their usual style, they are not designed for individual vehicles, but instead give various markings that the modeller can use based on their references. A list of both printed and online sources used to produce the markings is included with each set.

Israeli Tank Markings 1 (35052) is designed for the Merkava 3 series and is typical of the sets. Included are brigade markings, white stripes for the gun barrel which are battalion identifiers, the 'spinning chevron' which denotes the company the tank serves in, individual tank markings in both small size as painted on mudguards and larger versions as they appear on removable panels on the turret basket and the white line aiming aid on the top of the gun barrel. In addition, small warning notices, numbers for the side skirts and a large vehicle name complete the set. Most items are plain white or white with black edging or shadow. Serial numbers are not included but a separate set has been released for them, see later.

Israeli Tank Markings 2 (35053) covers the improved Centurion SHOT-KAL and TIRAN series T-54, T-55 and T-62 tanks of the 1980s and 1990s in similar style. These are slightly more colourful, with some red items among the white and black.

Israeli Tank Markings 3 (35054) provides insignia for Centurions in the 1960s and 1970s with various chevrons, brigade and tactical signs, again mostly white and black.



Israeli Tank Markings 4 (35055) covers the M109 series 155mm self-propelled gun from the 1980s to modern times. This includes some large call signs in various styles and various tactical and unit markings as well as barrel bands and a couple of cartoon-style logos for the fume extractor and also markings for ammunition boxes.

Israeli Tank Markings 5 (35056) is for the various Centurion-based heavy carrier vehicles; the PUMA engineer vehicle, NAGMACHON combat engineer vehicle and ACHZARIT APC, which are currently in service. Among the chevrons, call signs and skirt IDs are engineers' markings, which looks like a modified 'H' in two styles.

Israeli Tank Markings 6 (35057) sheet is designed to be used with any and all of the above, and provides around 1500 individual numbers and the 'Aleph' letter suffix in different sizes and styles to be used for vehicle serial numbers for a range of vehicles. Examples and placement details are provided for several different types and they will have uses for many other AFVs and soft skins.

Each marking on these sheets is clearly printed in matt finish on its own individual piece of backing sheet that will reduce the need for trimming. Instructions are in the usual Bison style with black and white drawings showing where the markings are to be placed, though these are general guides and not for specific subjects. These sets will be useful for anyone modelling IDF vehicles, there is the drawback that you will need to buy set 35057 as well as the individual markings for a chosen subject, though that sheet has plenty of markings for several models.

Bison Decals are available from several outlets, my sets was bought direct from Bison's website http://www.angelfire.com/pro/bison/ Their service is fast, payment using PayPal is quick and easy and at US$9.00 plus postage for each set they are very good value.

Peter Brown

Price USD$9.00 each set

Bison Decals, Johan Lexell, Ryttarvagen 25, 15159 Sodertalje, Sweden contact@bison-decals.com http://www.angelfire.com/pro/bison/

1/4 ton. 4x4 Truck
1:72
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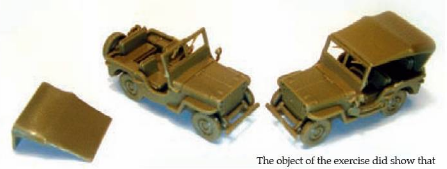

Italeri

Italeri have produced a readily available injection moulded kit of the American 1/4 ton truck - the ubiquitous 'jeep' in 1:72 scale, something aircraft modellers, and latterly, military vehicle modellers have wanted for years. However, Italeri have produced their jeep, two to the box, as a 'Fast Assembly Kit' (ALZZER 'Wargames Approved') Kit No. 7506 with 11 parts to each model and designed as what they intended it for – wargaming!

Assembly is a simple job and an exploded diagram of how it goes together is on the back of the box. Parts are sprued and need to be cut away and, except for the windscreen, it all hangs together pretty well without glue with 'snap together' technology where friction of joining plastic parts works quite well, however, a sure fire test would be to get a youngster to assemble it and I called upon the services of James, my seven-year-old grandson.

James knows what a Second World War American jeep looks like, so he had a head start over any kid his age that didn't. I did the sharp knife work removal of parts from the sprues and I was pleasantly surprised to watch him put the bits together in minutes. Soon the call, "The windscreens won't stay in granddad, they keep dropping out and I can't get the tops to stay on either," which came as no surprise from my initial examination. A brief introduction to liquid glue and a brush soon put things right in that direction.

The object of the exercise did show that Italeri had got things right and produced a simplified 1:72 scale kit of the jeep. It's one that shouldn't be ignored by serious modellers who should be able to work wonders detailing these little gems. Wargamers, of course, will find that at £5.25 a pair they can build up quite a fleet. Especially developed for Wargame use - you can't argue with that!

Italeri kits are imported into the UK by The Hobby Company Ltd., Garforth Place, Knoll Hill, Milton Keynes MK5 8PH. Tel: 01908 605686. Fax: 01908 605666. sales@hobbyco.net enquiries@hobbyco.net

Ken Jones

Price £5.25

Italeri S.p.A., Via Pradazzo 6/B 40012 Calderara de Reno (BO) Italy. Fax: 00 39 51 726 459. italeri@italeri.com

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U.S. OLIVE DRAB
LIFECOLOR
CAMOUFLAGE SET
Lightly satin U.S. Army colors War time and late post War period
IF IT MOVES... SHOOT IT... IF NOT PAINT IT IN OLIVE DRAB

Lifecolor

Lifecolor paint is designed for use in the airbrush and is recommended by The Airbrush Company for use in the Iwata airbrushes they import into the UK. The paint is acrylic and dries to a matt finish unless specified as 'satin' like the new *Kriegsmarine* German Navy WWII Set 2 for *U-bootwaffe*. This box has six colours; DKM23 *Schiffsbodenfabe III Grau; Schlickgrau 58; Blaugrau 58-1; Dunkegrau 52; Dunkelgrau 53; teerfirnis Tf 99* (faded). Excellent for those Revell U-boat kits.

Olive Drab in its six variants offers this much argued about colour - Olive Drab FS33070; Olive Drab 319; Khaki OD FS34088. Olive Drab FS 34088; Olive Drab faded type 1; Olive Drab faded type 2. More than enough in the box for modellers to argue about the shades for years to come.

A 'Dust and Rust Diorama Set' offers four rust and two dust colours - Rust dark shadow; Rust base colour; Rust light shadow 1. Rust light shadow 2; Dust type 1; Dust type 2. Plenty here to experiment spraying through your airbrush for special effects.

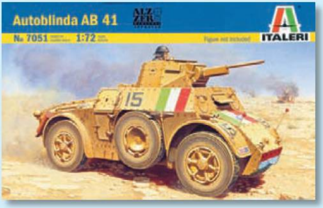
Lifecolor paints are available in the UK from The Airbrush Company, Marlborough Road, Lancing Business Park, Lancing, West Sussex BN15 8UF. Tel: 08700 660 445. Fax: 08700 660 817. www.Airbrushes.com

Ken Jones

Price £13.90 set of six

Lifecolor Acrylic Hobby Colours, Astromodel, Genoa, Italy.

Tel: + 39 010 2464555. Fax: + 39 010 256477. lifecolor@astromodel.it



Italeri

Italeri have had some success with their 1:35 scale series of injection moulded plastic kits of the Italian Second World War *autoblinda* armoured cars on the AB 41 chassis, and the type was a handsome looking, well-armed vehicle used to good effect by Italian forces in North Africa. Their German allies also liked the vehicle too and used it whenever they acquired examples.

Italeri have downsized the kit to their now quite extensive 1:72 scale range of military vehicles and the basic *Autoblinda AB 41* has been released as Kit No.7051. There is only one sprue for all the parts in the box, moulded in a dark sand colour. The detail is very crisp and the rivets on the hull side are especially finely moulded. The breeches of both turret guns are included so opened top and back hatches don't reveal an empty interior.

Decals are provided for four different variants - Italian African Police, Tunisia 1943; *Regio Esercito* Libya 1942; *Wehrmacht* 162nd Infantry Division Italy, July 1944; *Regio Esercito* 15th Cavalry Regiment (*R.E.CO.*) Pinerolo, Italy 1942. Camouflage schemes with colour references are provided on the instruction sheet and three of them as colour profiles on the back of the box.

Italeri kits are imported into the UK by The Hobby Company Ltd., Garforth Place, Knoll Hill, Milton Keynes MK5 8PH. Tel: 01908 605686. Fax: 01908 605666. sales@hobbyco.net enquiries@hobbyco.net

Ken Jones

Price £6.50

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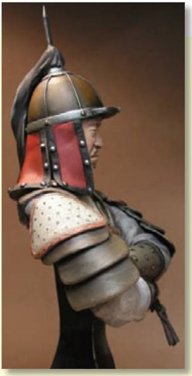
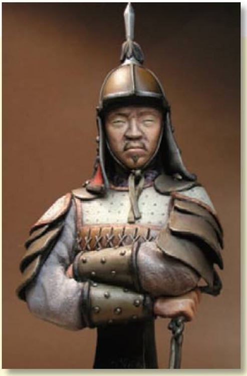
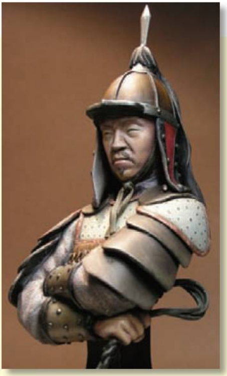






PiLiPiLi

Latest bust in PiLiPiLi's Man O' War series is a Mongol Commander AD1200, the time of the rise to power of Genghis Khan, (MW-06) cast in polyurethane resin to 1:10 scale. The bust includes the folded arms of the commander and wears what is mainly boiled leather armour (*cuir bouilli*) with felt backing and metal fittings. The tunic is coarse wool Quang's information sheet tells us, so this model does offer plenty of different materials to paint on the one sculpture.

Almost hidden is a whip in his right hand under the left elbow. The helmet is leather with metal strip reinforcements and a spike, with a Yak hair plume to indicate the status of its wearer as a commander.

Quang has made a superb design job on the facial features of the Mongol Commander and the best I've seen for quite some time. Painting information is given in coloured photographs on the kit's box. Also his resin casting is of to the highest standards and where possible he makes joins follow logical folds and limits of the items of clothing and equipment, which makes for easier painting of sub assemblies.

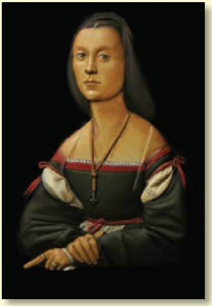
Another release from PiLiPiLi in their newly introduced FLATZ range in the Museum Series is MU-04 and a finely moulded resin semi *ronde bosse* of a lady after Raphael's La Muta c.1502. This is purely a painter's model, a one piece flat resin casting to practise painting skills upon.

PiLiPiLi kits are available in the UK from Historex Agents, Wellington House, 157 Snargate Street, Dover, Kent CT17 9BZ. Tel: 01304 206720. Fax: 01304 204528.
sales@historex-agents.co.uk
www.historexagents.com

Ken Jones

Prices tba

PiLiPiLi, Belgradestraat 68, B-2800 Mechelen, Belgium. *pili.pili@skynet.be http://www.pilipili-miniatures.com*



Friulmodel

For anyone who still has an RPM 1:35 scale Soviet T-28 tank kit in their stash, Friulmodel has just introduced some cast white metal replacement articulated track links for it. The box contains 250 links and a coil of wire to be cut to lengths for the track pivots. The wire slides through drilled holes in the track links to enable them to fully articulate.

The idea of making these tracks articulate is so they can be effectively draped around the sprockets and idlers and anything in between on a tracked vehicle's suspension to produce a realistic appearance.

If you have used Friulmodel tracks then you will know they do look very good and the natural weight of the white metal produces sag. If the kit sprockets are unsuitable then replacement cast white metal ones are included. In the case of the T-28, however, these are not necessary. The wire supplied for track pivots is soft and cuts to length easily, however, some modellers prefer to replace it with a more rigid wire or very fine rod.

Preparing the links can be laborious, which puts off some modellers from using these tracks. The links are 'drilled' out, but some of these 'predrilled', cast-in holes may need 'easing' with a .5mm drill bit. The wires once in place are secured with a spot of cyano glue.

White metal readily accepts most paints and once the tracks are in place the high spots on the treads can be given a realistic bare worn metal appearance by removing the paint with a fine abrasive.

Friulmodel products are available in the UK from Historex Agents, Wellington House, 157 Snargate Street, Dover, Kent CT17 9BZ. Tel: 01304 206720. Fax: 01304 204528.
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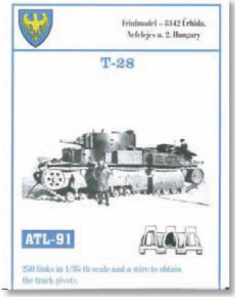
Ken Jones

Price £19.50 + £1.95

Friulmodel, 8142 Úrhida, Nefelejcs u.2. Hungary.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- The next issue of ***Military Modelling Magazine*** (Issue No.3) will be a 100-page, perfect bound special issue on modelling Armoured Fighting Vehicles. Issue No.3 will also be ***Collectors' Edition Issue 3*** and will be followed in June with ***Collectors' Edition Issue 4*** that will also be a special issue on modelling miniature figures and published on 27th June. ***Collectors' Edition Issue 5*** will be published in October and will feature a selection of the models at our Euro Militaire 2008 show in Folkestone.

- The 100-page AFV Special out next month will have modelling articles by ***Military Modelling*** contributors presented as extended features with more photos and drawings…

- Just a sample of the content of ***Collectors' Edition Issue 3***

- Tamiya's IS-2 …The model and history by Steve Zaloga

- Early variant of the *Brummbär* in 1:72 scale by Harvey Low

- M7 Priests at El Alamein by Peter Brown and Steve Zaloga also builds the Academy 1:35 scale model

- Japanese *Ka Mi* modelled by John Prigent

- British Terrapin Amphibian scratch built by Mark Bannerman

- Sherman Colours in the Middle East by Mike Starmer

- Staffordshire Yeomanry's tanks in Normandy by Peter Heath …

And that's only some of the content there will be more surprises to come… don't miss your copy that will be on sale 29th February price £4.99. If you are a Military Modelling subscriber you will receive it as part of your subscription delivered to your door from 22nd February onwards.

See more about what's in Military Modelling magazine month-to-month and forthcoming issues plus some of the articles you may have missed throughout the past year on our Website

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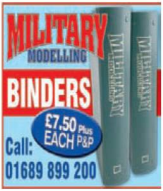
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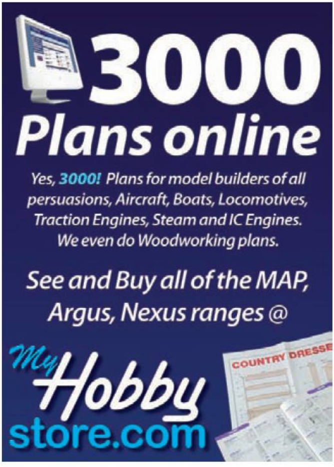
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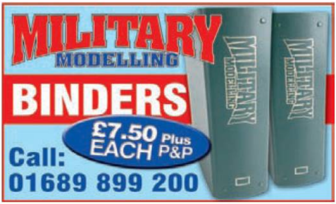
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Advertisers' Index

A
Accurate Armour 10
The Airbrush Company 84
Aviation Book Centre 7
B
Binders 10
C
Classicae Ltd 2
H
Historex Agents 5
K
Kit Krazy 10
L
LSA Models 6
M
Magicalia Subscriptions 4
Magicalia Magazine Binders 10
Military Modelling Website 14
MMD Squadron 11
P
Phoenix Precision Paints 10
Pocketbond Ltd 55 & 73
S
SBX Model Shop 9
Seil Models 83
T
Trucks 'n' Tracks 8
W
Woodworker Show 78 & 79

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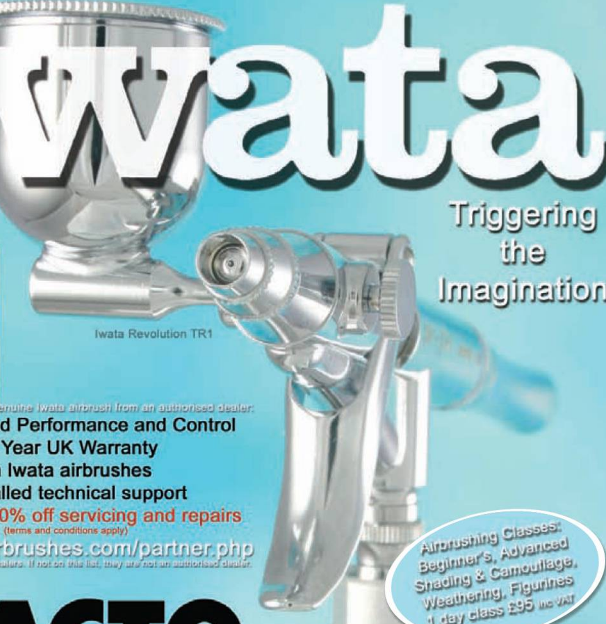

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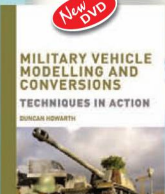
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